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#65 WINTER 1999/2000

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Yeah, we're playing "Bobby Jean" again—wanna make somethin' of it?

# Backstreets

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**Editor**  
Christopher Phillips

**Senior Editor**  
Charles R. Cross

**Assistant Editor**  
Drew Whittemore

**Associate Editors**  
Erik Flannigan, Jonathan B. Pont, Robert Santelli

**Contributors**  
Rich Breton, Robert Crane, David DuBois, Lynn Elder,  
Jared Houser, Josh Jacobson, Phil and Steve Jump, Bob Makin,  
Jon Phillips, Jim Ragsdale, Bernie Ranellone,  
Debra L. Rothenberg, Arlen Schumer, Mary Schuh,  
James Shive, Billy Smith, Mark Stricherz, Mark Sullivan,  
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### BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

10/28/99 Oakland, CA  
Paul Jay Plutzer Photo

## OFF THE WALL

### BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

10/23/99 Los Angeles, CA  
Marc Shapiro Photo



# LETTERS

## THE BIG MUDDY

Dear Editor:

I have had the opportunity now to see three U.S. shows, and they have all been excellent shows. However, I have discussed the shows with many long-time Bruce fans. No one can put their finger on what seems to be missing.

Here is how I feel: Bruce and the band are in top form. They are playing some of the greatest music ever written and playing it well every night. I have no complaints in this area, and seeing them play as they encompass the sheer joy of playing on stage together is simply awesome.

The sound, however—meaning the public address house sound—is lacking, and this is a huge problem. We have been used to exceptional, state-of-the-art arena sound for all previous tours. On this tour, the sound tends to be bass-heavy with a significant loss of definition. I have had great, good, and average seats, and I gotta say that in all three instances, the sound was not great. This is the only disappointment, but it's very difficult to accept as good sound is an aspect Bruce has been known for. I can assure you that I am not

alone in this complaint. I would love to know how other Bruce fans have felt about this issue.

Would I go to another show if the opportunity came up? Hell, yeah. But I am cautious about the overall sound projection of the band. Especially if this is the last time for a long time.

Jeff Amato  
Los Angeles, CA

## I NEVER FEEL ALONE

Dear Editor:

I couldn't agree with you more about the conduct of talkative and rude people attending Springsteen concerts ["Til You Lose Your Patience," On the Backstreets, #64]. I've seen every tour since the *Darkness* tour, and it always confuses and angers me that some people are so distractible. I will never understand it.

Those views certainly aren't "elitist" or "controlling." I enjoy the rock 'n' roll party atmosphere of Bruce's shows during those songs, but it's the deeper and more introspective songs that I look forward to the most. And so many of those moments are ruined by assholes.

It's amazing, because of all the Springsteen shows I've seen over the last twenty years, I've only seen him one time in his home state, this past August at the Meadowlands. And that was the

worst crowd I've ever seen. I honestly thought I was missing something all these years for not having seen him in Jersey. It's comforting to know that I'm not alone.

Bobby Wysner  
via e-mail

## STAND UP NOW

Dear Editor:

I just finished reading the latest issue of *Backstreets*, and your article on the idiocy of some of the "fans" in attendance hit the nail on the head. I was fortunate enough to have gone to seven shows this tour. I have never been more disgusted with a crowd at a concert than at any of these shows. Things ranging from a stupid idiot behind me saying, "That version of 'Born in the U.S.A.' sucks. Where is the real version?" to people sitting down during a majority of the show. I was almost trampled when the mass exodus of people staggered to the beer and food lines during "Point Blank" or "Mansion on the Hill." I was also forced to tell ten people around me to shut their mouths during some of the most intimate moments.

If you looked out into the sea of "fans", especially in the first few rows, a select few of them knew the words to maybe only half of Bruce's songs. When "Don't Look Back" opened the second night in Detroit, I was blessed to be sitting in the seventh row on the floor. Only myself and my friends were going nuts, singing all the words while everyone around us acted as if they were on Valium at a Perry Como sleepfest. The same holds true for "The Ties That Bind," "Ramrod," "Murder Incorporated," and a host of others. This happened in many places, including, surprisingly enough, Jersey. Embarrassing is the only way to describe it.

Seeing Bruce and the E Street Band is a religious experience for many of us true fans, and the shows I saw were incredible in spite of these dumb-asses I was forced to sit by. I hope that when the tour continues next year that these idiots either get with the program, go to rehab, or stay at home. Bruce, keep up the good work. There are some of us in the audience who still appreciate

what you are doing and treasure your live performances.

Jason Berkley  
via e-mail

## HEAR THE VOICES

Dear Editor:

I couldn't agree more with Jonathan Pont's comments about rude behavior on the part of some people at the Springsteen shows. I was very fortunate to have been able to attend two shows, one in Philly and one in Buffalo, and had 11th row and 17th row seats, respectively; getting those seats was sheer luck, believe me!

Anyhow, at the Philly show, I can't tell you how many times some of the people around me—in the 11th row—went out for beers! How drunk does one need to be to enjoy a Springsteen show, especially that close to the stage?

At the Buffalo show, I managed to get right up near to the stage after "Born to Run," and in front of me were three young women who were chatting so loud it was beyond distraction; I wouldn't have been surprised if Bruce could hear them. I finally put my hands on their shoulders and asked politely if their conversation couldn't wait until after the show, whereupon another fellow who had clearly had enough was now prompted to yell at them, "Yeah! Shut the fuck up!" They did stop, and only whispered a few more times before the show was over.

Stew Glick  
via e-mail

## IS IT A DEAL?

Dear Editor:

The new issue came yesterday, and it was really well put-together. This is my first issue of *Backstreets* in about four years, and I was again impressed.

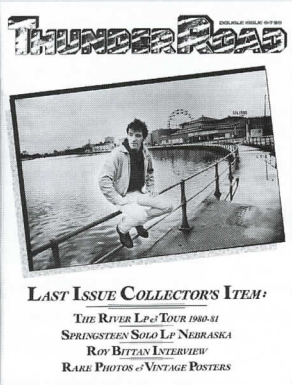
I think one of the things that was not addressed in the editorial is that the reason for much of the chatter during Springsteen's slow or unfamiliar songs is that our collective attention span has gone down the tubes. Everything is louder, faster, funnier! Get to the punch line! Get to the sex! Get to the explosion!

If I were Springsteen, I would pay the arena to close the concessions during the performance

# THUNDER ROAD FINAL ISSUE: #6/7

We've scored the very last stack of these and can offer them at a lower price than we've seen before, but when they're gone, that's it. The first Springsteen fanzine, *Thunder Road*, stopped publishing in the early '80s after only a handful of issues, but they were an inspiration to *Backstreets* and remain great collectibles and great reads, too. This double issue was the magazine's swan song and probably its best. *Thunder Road* #6/7 is a huge 64-page issue packed with solid writing and beautiful photos. Especially at this price, it's a must-have.

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(concessions aren't open during Broadway shows, for instance), and tell the audience at the beginning that he's in a relationship with us and he'll play the things we want to hear if we listen to the things that he wants us to hear. And if people don't shut up, don't play the favorites. The audience will quiet down quick, or the ones who won't will be shut up by the ones who care.

As a performer who's been onstage, it's murder when people don't pay attention or fidget or leave early—and that's in a small-time play. Springsteen has earned the attention of the audience, and he deserves to get it however he chooses.

I don't believe in that crap that audiences are allowed free rides because they've paid their ticket price. To me, that's like saying a woman is supposed to give you sex because you bought her dinner. It's about relationships. And with the audience slacking off so much in recent years, and the entertainment industry rewarding it, we will continue to be subjected to mindless entertainment for mindless idiots.

I hope Springsteen takes the lead in correcting this.

David Billotti  
New York, NY

## ONE CLEAR MOMENT

Dear Editor:

It's great that fans have the opportunity to see multiple shows on this 1999 tour. I love reading *Backstreets* for the insight in comparing performances, audiences, venues, Bruce's behavior and so much more. Keep those concert reports coming.

However, for all the fans (like me) who had or may have the opportunity to see only one show, I would like to point out a benefit of *not* going to multiple shows: having no basis of comparison for the one performance you get to see.

I was lucky enough to see the Cleveland show on November 14, and my high expectations were surpassed early in the show. The typical "A" set list was performed with a few twists, but I couldn't have cared less. The power coming off that stage up to me in row five of the balcony kept me on my feet all night.

For all I know, that night may have been the worst show of the

entire tour. The band may have been off, the audience may have been terrible, the sound may have been below-average, and it may go down as just another "typical" Bruce concert to a fan with the insight from going to multiple shows. Thankfully on that night, I didn't have that insight.

That was *my show*, my only night to witness the power and the promise, and I loved it. For a fan from the Northwest who had to arrange some creative traveling to see just one show in 1999, it was a beautiful reward.

Bryan King  
Vancouver, BC

## I CAN TAKE YOU HIGHER

Dear Editor:

I just received my final issue of *Backstreets*. My compliments on another quality issue.

However, I've come to the end of the line with Bruce Springsteen. I can't find anything in him that speaks to my experience anymore. All I can see is a shrewd businessman singing the praises of faith and solidarity and rock 'n' roll to those of us who can afford his hefty ticket price. Quite an irony: an exclusionary message of inclusion.

What I see now is only a shell of what I saw way back when, when I was younger. Now it all seems like a charade, a mass delusion. I guess "those childish dreams must end." I'm getting too old for this.

A word to those readers who defensively wrote to the magazine, defending Bruce's sovereign right to charge them however much he pleases, "economics of touring" or not: now that Bruce and Landau and the rest of Bruce Springsteen Inc. know the fans will happily cough up \$70 for a ticket, next time they'll charge \$100. Count on it.

Well, it's time to move on. So long, and good luck.

Kyle Mize  
via e-mail

## POWER DRIVE

Dear Editor:

I'm surprised more hasn't been made of the five-song "suite" in the middle of the main set: no matter what else he plays, Bruce always plays (in order and with-

Continued page 34

# OFFICIAL TOUR '99 SOUVENIER SHOP

All items here are officially licensed Springsteen merchandise sold on the E Street band rededication tour!



## 1999 TOURBOOK

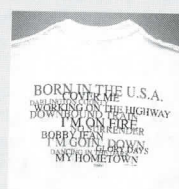
The brand new official tourbook sold on the E Street Band tour is a 38-page program packed with color photos of Bruce and the band, onstage and off. With a spread devoted to each E Streeter, a beautiful memento of the reunion.....\$20



## BORN TO RUN T-SHIRT

This white shirt has the classic *Born to Run* cover on the front, and another shot of Bruce and Clarence from the same sessions on the back,

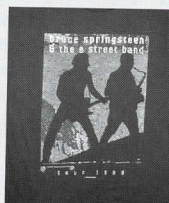
smaller and toward the top. A great-looking shirt for *Born to Run*—it's about time! Pre-shrunk, 100% cotton. Available in L and XL only, be sure to tell us your size. \$20



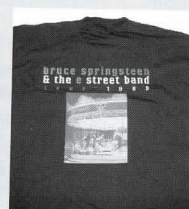
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A white shirt with the *Born in the U.S.A.* cover on the front, and song titles printed on the back in red and blue. Pre-shrunk, 100% cotton.

Available in L and XL.....\$20



**1999 TOUR T-SHIRT #1** Yet another official shirt from the new tour, a black shirt with front design only, picturing the new tour image of Bruce and Clarence in silhouette, reads Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, Tour 1999. As with all other shirts here: pre-shrunk, 100% cotton. Available in L and XL.....\$20



## 1999 TOUR T-SHIRT #2

A black two-sided shirt, with a full-color shot of Bruce and the Band on the front. On the back is a red and gold duotone image of the carousel, with "Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band,"

Tour 1999" type. Pre-shrunk, 100% cotton. L and XL.....\$20

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## Washington to Washington

# Down the Road Apiece

By Christopher Phillips

**B**ackstreets is moving! Backstreets is moving east. I've repeated it over and over to myself without the reality of it setting in. But now I'm sitting at my desk surrounded by boxes, some piled up to the ceiling (if you've ever been to our Seattle office, you know that space is tight)—boxes filled with Springsteen photos and news clippings, Backstreets back issues, compact discs... every last computer disk and ticket stub packed up and ready to relocate. So the fact of it has become pretty hard to ignore. In a few days, our entire office will be loaded onto a truck to hit the highway, going from one Washington to the other. In a matter of weeks, Backstreets will settle in to its new home in the District of Columbia. While I don't see much rest for myself in the weeks to come, at least there'll finally be a rest from that question: "what's a Bruce Springsteen magazine doing on the West Coast?"

As has been recounted in this space a number of times, *Backstreets* magazine began in Charles Cross's Seattle basement two decades ago. We'll celebrate our 20th year of publishing this fall, and it's as much (or more) a testament to Springsteen fans as to Springsteen himself that *Backstreets* has been around that long. Just as amazing may be that we've managed to resist the pull of the East Coast for that many years.

It's a move I've considered making for a while now. Like last March, when it was announced—with just days to spare—that Springsteen and the E Street Band would be opening their Asbury Park, NJ, rehearsals to the public. I was 3,000 miles away, and yeah, the appeal of living on the East Coast occurred to me at that point. I was able to score some tickets, thanks to some generous friends, and arrange a last-minute flight without breaking the bank. As I boarded the plane at midnight, and as I shuffled blearily through a 4 a.m. layover, the appeal occurred to me then, too. And in July, as one friend caught all 15 Meadowlands shows, I spent an entire day crossing the country to catch only the tail end of the stand. And a few weeks later, on another plane heading east for the Boston shows... you get the idea. A move has been brewing for a while.

As masthead-watchers have long-since noticed, I took over the pub-

lishing of *Backstreets* magazine from Charley Cross at the end of 1997. We didn't make a big deal of the transition at the time, particularly since I'd already been editing the magazine for a number of years. Really, not a whole lot changed around here—some shifting of responsibilities, sure, and Charley was finally able to find time for other work he wanted to do. But we've continued to share an office, and the welfare of *Backstreets* has clearly never been far from his mind.

For me, an avid reader of *Backstreets* since 1984, it was an incredible thrill when I began working for the magazine back in the early '90s. As an East Coast kid who'd never been within a thousand-mile radius of Seattle until then, it was a turn I never imagined my life would take. I can't imagine a better mentor, either. But being entrusted with this endeavor is one of the greatest gestures of faith and trust I've known. I've felt my mission to be keeping *Backstreets* up to the standards that Charley set years ago. I'm sure no one needs to read yet another testimony to how modern technology keep us all connected. Let it suffice to say, I'll miss seeing Charley on a daily basis, but thank God for e-mail.

A lot of readers have asked what Charley has been up to over the past couple of years. He's remained a regular and essential contributor to *Backstreets*, in many capacities, and he'll continue to be. But now freer to pursue other projects, he's working non-stop on a biography of Kurt Cobain (let's see, a loner kid from a small industrial town picks up a guitar, and a part of the country that hadn't been on the musical map soon becomes a mecca—sound familiar?). Judging by some of the stories he's shared with me so far, this thing is going to be incredible. We'll be sure to let you know when the book is hitting the shelves—and I bet you'll hear about it anyway.

Assistant Editor Drew Whittemore has also been an indispensable part of the crew, and even though he had planned to move on to another job last fall, he decided to stick around to make sure the *Backstreets* move goes smoothly. His dedication, hard work, friendship, and CD collection have made the past few years around here a joy, and he deserves a lot of thanks.

As long as we're catching up with *Backstreets* key players, it's worth pointing out how much relocation there has been, and how far-flung

many of our correspondents are. Contributing Editor Erik Flannigan spent time in Los Angeles and Austin before returning to Seattle a few years back; Contributing Editor Jonathan Pont left Seattle and has lived in Manhattan for the past four years. Robert Makin, our Jersey Shore correspondent, lives just where you'd expect him to; writing the "Greetings from Asbury Park" column before him was Robert Santelli, who relocated to Cleveland to serve as Director of Education for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Other *Backstreets* contributors on the masthead can be found everywhere from Los Angeles to Minneapolis, Washington D.C., London and beyond.

Our editors—no matter how hard-working or dedicated they have been—have always been supplemented by an army, usually invisible to most readers, of our subscribers and friends. This magazine has always truly been a group effort, the result of a larger community coming together. The thousands of people who have sent clippings, photos, subscription checks—or supported the magazine through Backstreet Records—have kept *Backstreets* going and growing in an age when community in many other walks of life seems to be fracturing. Many of those contributors never get their name in the magazine, but their support has been essential to keeping *Backstreets* going all these years. We've always maintained that this magazine is not done for Bruce Springsteen—it's for and by the community of fans that have been touched by the music of Springsteen and other Jersey Shore artists. Counting all the contributions from our readers—in all 50 states, and overseas from Thailand to Turkey—we're *everywhere*. We're bad, we're worldwide.

And very soon we'll be headquartered on the East Coast. As much as I'll miss Seattle, that just feels right. So does D.C. itself as a central location—closer to my family in the South (maybe I can finally take my folks to a show), and still an easy ride to Philly, New York and New Jersey. New York was my first choice, to be honest, but sticker shock took care of that. Not only is it hard to be a saint in that city, it's hard to buy a damn sandwich. For the rental cost of a closet in Manhattan, we found some nice digs in the District—more elbow room than the Seattle office, just down the street from the zoo and

right above an Irish pub. If you're ever in the area, I hope you'll come by and have a pint.

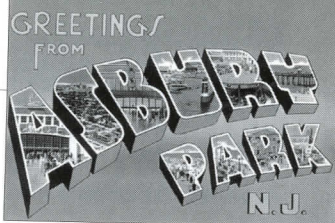
Be sure to note our new mailing address: Backstreets, 2607 24th St. NW, Suite 4, Washington DC 20008. If you've sent something recently to our Seattle address, not to worry—we'll definitely still get it. Our website and e-mail addresses will stay the same. All subscription data, and all our records, will be intact in the new office, so your relationships with us will be maintained on our end. But please take note of our new address and phone number, and keep in touch! See page 8 of this issue for more detailed contact info, and we'll keep you up to date on the move with a webpage at [www.backstreets.com/relocation.html](http://www.backstreets.com/relocation.html).

Making the move at the beginning of this year couldn't be better timing, as it turns out. With Springsteen and the E Streeters take a break from the road, we've got a perfect window to relocate before the madness begins again in March. *Backstreets* should be up and running in the new office by mid-February. While it may take some time to get everything squared away, if all goes well you won't notice a thing, other than the different address and phone number. We do need to ask your patience if you're ordering from Backstreet Records—with the time it takes to get everything across the country and set back up, we're sure to be a few weeks behind our usual turn-around time. So, thanks for your patience and your support.

We'll continue to keep the website and subscriber hotlines updated during the transition, especially since there should be plenty of news to pass along over the next month. As I write, in fact, we're expecting an itinerary for Tour 2000 to be announced in a matter of days.

Which points out one bit of irony. Sometime during the mad scramble to close this issue and pack up those boxes, I realized that the E Street Band would finally be swinging into the Pacific Northwest after I've already left. After a year of waiting for Bruce to come to my neck of the woods, I'm screwing myself out of the payoff! But all that flying in 1999 left me with something other than jetlag and the urge to live on the east coast again: that's right, frequent flyer miles. And here's hoping that this spring I'll get to use 'em to come right back to Seattle. 🐾





## Backyard blast with Bruce

# Raising the Barn Roof

By Robert Makin

**J**ersey favorite Jon Bon Jovi recently ended nearly a year-long performing break in an intimate way. His band performed at the Colts Neck home of Pam and Anthony Diaco on December 4, 1999. The Diacos received the holiday gift of a backyard Bon Jovi concert by bidding \$60,000 at the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism benefit Jon held last summer.

The show took place in the couple's barn and included opener La Bamba and the Hubcaps, plus a few very special guests. Southside Johnny joined Bon Jovi toward the end of the night, as did Bruce Springsteen and his wife Patti Scialfa. This was Springsteen's only known performance for the remainder of 1999 following the closing E Street Band shows in Minneapolis. Bruce was onstage for a handful of covers to close the set, including "Lucille," "Treat Her Right," "Pretty Woman," and "Havin' a Party," plus his own "Red Headed Woman."

Bon Jovi currently is recording an album in Jon's home studio. Fans can check out the production every day from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at [www.bonjovi.com](http://www.bonjovi.com).

Southside Johnny, the producer of Jon Bon Jovi's first demo while he was still with the Asbury bar band The Atlantic City Expressway, was back home in the Garden State for a Y2K gig in Atlantic City.

The sold-out show was at Resort's Eleven33, a new venue Southside helped launch in July. In a preview, the *Trenton Times* revealed that the South plans to release the long-awaited album he has been recording on and off for years in Nashville with Neptune High School buddy and E Street bassist Garry Tallent.

"I don't see any place for me anywhere in radio or with record companies," Southside told the *Trenton Times*. But fortunately for me there's the Internet. If I make another album, I'll just put it out

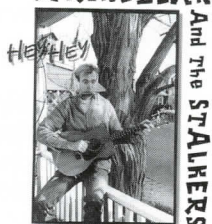


Southside Johnny in New York City, 1/5/00.

for free on the Internet, 'cause I don't make any money from my records anyway."

The disc, which will combine new material with classic R&B and blues standards, will be released later this year via the Web. It will be Southside's first studio release since the Asbury Jukes' *Better Days*, the 1991 collaboration with Springsteen, Van Zandt, Bon Jovi and Tallent.

### STRINGBEAN



It's been a while since any unsung heroes of the classic Asbury Park music scene made some serious waves, but the members of the roots-rockin' Stringbean & the Stalkers are doing their best.

The bluesy outfit no doubt qualifies as a local supergroup.

Guitarist Sonny Kenn was the

first boss of both Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez and Southside Johnny Lyon in Sonny & the Starfires in the mid-'60s. Kenn went on to form the Sonny Kenn Blues Band; Maelstrom; the hot, nearly-signed '80s act the Wild Ideas; and the Sonny Kenn Band, his current outfit.

In 1974, bassist Dave Myers co-founded Blackberry Booze Band, which eventually was taken over by Southside Johnny and Miami Steve and evolved into the Asbury Jukes. After playing in the Renegade Blues Band, Myers revamped Blackberry Booze with co-founding guitarist Paul Dicklor as Blackberry Blooze Band.

Before Bruce Springsteen came to town, Billy Ryan used to lead the all-night jams at the Upstage. In the late '60s he was a prime architect of the Asbury Park sound as the guitarist in Mrs. Jay's house band. That group, the Jaywalkers, also included future E Streeters Garry Tallent and Steve Van Zandt. Ryan and Tallent then joined forces with Lopez and Danny Federici in the pre-E Street, R&B-rooted ensemble The Moment of Truth. Since then he's played with Nick Addeo & the Exceptions, Norman Seldin & the

Joyful Noize, Clarence Clemons' Red Bank Rockers, the Renegade Blues Band, and his own band, Ryan's Express.

These three cats were banded together by Ocean Grove harpist Kenny "Stringbean" Sorenson, who likes to spice up the blues with rockabilly, country and zydeco. From the mid-'80s to the early '90s, Sorenson played a similar mix in the Surreal McCoys, a New York City-based outfit. The group inspired such rootsy Gotham acts as Blues Traveler, Spin Doctors and Joan Osborne.

The Stalkers also includes McCoys accordionist Neil Thomas, who also plays with the popular New York zydeco ensemble Loup Garou. Rounding out the Stalkers is mandolinist Dickie Thomas. The drum spot gets rotated quite a bit, but a fellow named Vic Bayers most often sits behind the kit.

Since forming in 1996, Stringbean & the Stalkers have jammed Sundays at their homebase in a Belmar restaurant called Ragin' Cajun. 1999 marked the release of the Stalker's independent debut album, *Hey Hey*, a collection of a dozen enthusiastically arranged blues classics. Two of Sorenson's original instrumentals are also included, "Stalkin'" and "Showplace Shuffle."

The release on the Deal-based Blues Leaf Records includes fresh takes on such staples as Willie Dixon's "Bring It on Home" and John Lee Hooker's "Doin' the Shout."

The Stalkers apparently had no intention of recording until a deal was offered by Joe Morabia, the owner of Blues Leaf Records. Morabia became a Stalkers fan over a plate of Ragin' Cajun food.

"They watched us for quite a while, and it was one of those things where I said, 'I'll believe it when I see it,'" Sorenson told the *Asbury Park Press*. "But sure enough, they came through."

For copies of *Hey Hey*, contact the label at [bluesleaf@aol.com](mailto:bluesleaf@aol.com) or P.O. Box 234, Deal, NJ 07723.



We're going  
1,000 miles...  
2,000 miles...  
3,000 miles

# Backstreets is moving east!

Backstreets and Backstreet Records are taking advantage of the break in the tour to relocate! Our new address for all correspondence, subscriptions, and orders as of February 2000:

**Backstreets**  
**2607 24th St NW Suite #4**  
**Washington, DC 20008**

And our new phone number is (202) 232-2677. Yep, that's: **(202) 232-BOSS**

We're tempting fate by publishing that number before it's installed (or so the phone company tells us), so if you have any trouble reaching us, you can always call our old number in Seattle (206/728-7603) to be redirected to the new one.

Our website, [www.backstreets.com](http://www.backstreets.com), and our e-mail addresses will not change. As always, you can reach us by e-mail at [editor@backstreets.com](mailto:editor@backstreets.com) for letters to the editor, or [orders@backstreets.com](mailto:orders@backstreets.com) for subscriptions and merchandise orders. We'll also maintain a page on our website to keep everyone up to date on our new location and new contact information—like the new fax number to come—just visit the web address below.

If you've mailed or faxed something to us recently, don't worry—we'll still get it. Good folks in Seattle are taking care of making sure everything gets forwarded to the new office. And we plan on only being closed as long as it takes for those trucks to haul across the country. But we hope you'll bear with us in late January and early February as we make the move and get our office set back up. We'll be working hard and fast, and we'll have some rock 'n' roll music on the radio.... See ya on the East Coast!

**<http://www.backstreets.com/relocation.html>**



Steven speaks

## Looking Ahead to Tour 2000

It's a familiar feeling. At this time last year, Springsteen fans were anxiously awaiting the initial tour dates for the just-announced E Street Band reunion tour. A press release a month earlier confirming the imminent tour had promised "details [to be] announced after the first of the year."

It's early January again, and while all signs point to the E Street Band continuing their tour, as of press time we're once again waiting for dates. Shore Fire Media, Springsteen's publicist, has remained quiet on the subject. But this time the end-of-the-year tease came from Bruce himself, rather than from a press release. Wrapping up the final E Street Band show of 1999 in Minneapolis, Springsteen told the crowd: "We'll be out again next year!"

Springsteen's 1999 benediction hasn't been the last word; Steve Van Zandt has continued to maintain that more touring is on the horizon. With a high profile of late—thanks to his triple-threat activities as E Street Band guitarist, actor, and solo artist with a new album out—Van Zandt has been able to pass along E Street prospects in a series of interviews this winter.

In early December, he told the *St. Paul Pioneer Press'* Jim Walsh: "It's a little too good to go, 'OK, see ya,' and walk away. I can't see that. I think we'll be back."

Shortly afterward, Steven was more specific with Glenn Gamboa of the *Akron Beacon Journal*: "The way I see it, we're back together, and we're going to stay that way. I think next year will be a lot like this year." Steve told Gamboa that a tour could continue through June, when filming resumes for *The Sopranos*.

Van Zandt also spoke up on the possibility of new studio work from Bruce and band: "It looks like we will stay together and maybe even make a new record.... This hasn't even been fully discussed, but I think we all feel that things are going a little

too good to walk away now." Current rumors suggest that the band may try to make that record in the studio this summer, assuming that recording would take place in the New York/New Jersey area, Van Zandt could juggle both his musical and acting careers, much as he did during last year's Meadowlands stand. The band was reportedly slated to enter the studio in January, but that plan was postponed to ensure that they would be ready to hit the road when the time comes.

As for exactly when that time will be, our best guess at the moment is that the tour will resume in March and continue for several months. Current reports suggest that these spring shows will be scheduled across the U.S. and possibly Canada, to hit North American cities missed in 1999. When the itinerary is announced, regions such as the South and the Pacific Northwest should finally have concerts to call their own. The schedule may have shows concentrated around weekends, in part to help work around Max Weinberg's schedule as bandleader of the Max Weinberg Seven on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*.

We expect definitive tour plans to be announced soon; watch for any breaking news at [www.backstreets.com](http://www.backstreets.com). For now, even if all we have to go on are the words of Van Zandt, the prognosis is excellent. As he told Robert Hilburn in the *L.A. Times*: "I think [a 2000 tour] is going to happen. I think we can take Bruce's own words seriously when he says this tour is the rebirth of the band... not just a one-time tour."

Bruce Springsteen's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame a year ago had a bitter-sweet taste to some, as the honor didn't include his longtime comrades, the E Street Band. Bruce thanked his bandmates effusively during his acceptance speech and

asked them all to stand and join him, but the Hall itself didn't technically honor the efforts of the band. As has been pointed out by many, including Bruce, the Hall hasn't really had a "mechanism" to do so, to recognize the contributions of musicians who have been integral to another artist's career. Until now.

A new category in this year's Hall of Fame honors is that of "side-men"—and we assume that women will also be recognized. While it remains to be seen whether the E Street Band will be honored, and how—together as a group, or as individuals—it's heartening to see the Hall ensure that everyone gets their due. Criteria for the "side-men" is similar to the other categories, the Hall requiring a 25-year career and considering "the influence and significance of the artist's contribution to the development and perpetuation of rock and roll."

This year's honorees in the "side-men" category—which we can assume will include women as well—are saxophonist King Curtis, bassist James Jamerson, percussionist Hal Blaine, guitarist Scotty Moore, and drummer Earl Palmer. The 15th Annual Induction Ceremony will be held on March 6 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, NY.

It's nice when the fans are right. Not that a Grammy nod is always proof positive of quality, but "The Promise"—which was left off the *Tracks* box, then added to the 18 *Tracks* compilation after the resulting outcry from fans—has garnered two Grammy nominations for Bruce Springsteen. The song, written in 1976 and re-recorded in 1999 for 18 *Tracks*, has put Bruce on the ballot for both Best Male Rock Vocal and Best Rock Song.

The 42nd annual Grammy Awards will be held on February 23 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, CA. The ceremony will air on CBS.

—Christopher Phillips

## the backstreets jukebox

1. Little Steven  
*Born Again Savage*  
Renegade Nation (CD)

2. Curtis Mayfield  
*People Get Ready!*  
*The Curtis Mayfield Story*  
Rhino (3CD)

3. Moby  
*Play*  
V2 (CD)

4. Crowded House  
*Afterglow*  
Capitol (CD)

5. John Prine  
*In Spite of Ourselves*  
Oh Boy (CD)

6. The Negro Problem  
*Jays & Concerns*  
Aerial Flipout (CD)

7. Magnolia  
*Motion Picture Soundtrack*  
Reprise (CD)

8. Naked Raygun  
*[complete reissue series]*  
Quarterstick (CD)

9. Dolly Parton  
*The Grass is Blue*  
Sugar Hill (CD)

10. The Get-up Kids  
*Something to Write*  
*Home About*  
Vagrant (CD)

10  
**Monster**  
Discs to Play Today  
and Everyday



**BADA BING:** On January 5, Steve Van Zandt and Southside Johnny were among those taking the stage at the premiere party for the second season of the smash HBO series *The Sopranos*. The festivities began at New York's legendary Ziegfeld Theater, where two episodes were screened, then moved to the Roseland Ballroom for a dinner reception. La Bamba, leading a 21-piece band, provided the entertainment; Southside took vocals on faves like "I Don't Want to Go Home" and Little Steven's "Forever," while Steve himself performed "Inside of Me." Last year, when *The Sopranos* had its premiere party in the basement of the Virgin megastore and at a nearby pizzeria, Bruce Springsteen was one of the guests. The Boss couldn't make it this time out, but such A-list celebrities as Stephen King, Spike Lee, Matthew Broderick, Sarah Jessica Parker and Jon Bon Jovi were there. . . . As Steven returns to his role of Silvio Dante, his off-screen wife will join him onscreen as well. Steve told Robert Hilburn in the *L.A. Times*: "One thing different this season is they recast Silvio's wife, and Maureen tried out for the part and got it. So that's nice." Keeping it in the family, appropriately enough. . . . Steve is also the subject of the "20 Questions" feature in the February 2000 issue of *Playboy* magazine, interviewed while in Chicago with the E Street Band in the fall.

**LA VIDA LOCA:** While Ricky Martin may or may not be eating his heart out, following Springsteen's onstage exhortations, the fact remains that many in the U.S. are currently loco for Latino music. Two great tastes that go great together, you say? Enter Enrique Iglesias! The son of Julio covers Bruce's "Sad Eyes" on his debut English language album, and adds a Spanish version of the song to boot. . . . More straightforward—it's in English, anyway—is Faith Hill's cover of "If I Should Fall Behind" on her latest album, *Breathe*. . . . We already knew she was a fan, and she's covered "Dancing in the Dark," but extra kudos to Mary-Chapin Carpenter, who broke out a ver-

sion of "My Love Will Not Let You Down" at a recent performance after a request for some Springsteen. . . . Warren Zevon concert-goers may not have been surprised to hear "Jeannie Needs a Shooter," since he reworked the Springsteen song years ago on his *Bad Luck Streak in Dancing School* LP. But Zevon recently gave fans an extra Boss treat with his live rendition of "Ramrod." . . . And to round out these two-fers: Patti Griffin has covered "Stolen Car" in the past, as we've noted here, and she recently added "Racing in the Street" to her onstage repertoire. . . . One cover that won't be seeing the light of day—officially, anyway—is cross-dressing-of-late Kevin Rowland's take on "Thunder Road." The former Dexy's Midnight Runner took some serious liberties with the lyrics, and Springsteen's publishers, Zomba, nixed the song's release. "Thunder Road" has been pulled from Rowland's covers album *My Beauty*, though some advance promos did include the song. . . . Foregoing lyrics altogether is *Pickin' on Springsteen*, an instrumental bluegrass record songs from CMH Records. With 12 songs from "Born to Run" to "Streets of Philadelphia," it's perfect music for an elevator in Kentucky.

**MAKIN' A LIST:** As always, the end of the year brings lists aplenty, and the end of the century brings even more. National Public Radio polled listeners to create "The NPR 100." This list of the 100 most important musical works of the 20th century considered singles and albums from jazz to classical to rock, and the *Born to Run* LP made the cut. NPR's definition of "most important": "By virtue of its achievement, beauty, or excellence, the work is an important milestone of American music in the 20th century. It significantly changed the musical landscape, opened new horizons, or in itself had a major effect on American culture and civilization." . . . It's been a while since Bruce's virtual stranglehold on *Rolling Stone's* annual music poll in the mid-'80s, so it's good to see this return: Springsteen and the E Street Band were the critics' pick for "Tour of the Year." . . . *Entertainment Weekly* ranked the 100 greatest entertainers of the century (post-



Keeping it in the family: Steve "Silvio" Van Zandt rocks the Sopranos premiere party at Roseland in New York City, 1/5/00.

World War II, anyway), and Springsteen came in at number 35. A respectable showing, but even more impressive is that only nine musical acts ranked higher. The Beatles took top honors, with Elvis Presley at number two. . . . While *Born in the U.S.A.* has been outpaced by albums from the Eagles and Michael Jackson, Springsteen and the E Street Band still made the "RIAA Artists of the Century" list, thanks to the *Live* box. The RIAA's list is based on their sales-tracking Gold, Platinum and Diamond awards; *Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band: Live/1975-85* checks in as both the top-certified live album and top-certified box set of the century. . . . And as for half-centuries, *Modern Maturity* magazine listed Bruce under "Sexy Bosses" in their spotlight on "50 Sexiest Celebrities Over 50." . . . Springsteen was one of VH1's 12 nominees for "Artist of the Year," and while Dave Matthews was eventually selected by voters, it wasn't for VH1's lack of praise: "Hailed as the poet of the people as well as the savior of rock 'n' roll, Bruce has taken few missteps in his career. He always stays true to his subjects and his style." . . . Bruce also made *Vanity Fair's* "1999 Hall of Fame." Why? In part: "Because at the age of 50 (a shade younger than Baryshnikov) he still has stamina and jubilant spring, doing three-hour concerts that would send most performers wheezing into the oxygen tent. Because, in a career spanning more than a quarter of a century, the song catalogue of this 1999

inductee into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame tracks the long day's journey into night of both Springsteen himself and the careworn nation he has made his bride."

**OVER THE RISE:** We mourn the passing of Curtis Mayfield, Springsteen's fellow Class of '99 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee, who died in Roswell, GA, on the day after Christmas. Having paid tribute to Mayfield with "Gypsy Woman" on 1994's *All Men Are Brothers*, Springsteen sang Mayfield's words nightly on the 1999 tour, and the crowd echoed them back: "It's All Right!" With the Impressions and on his own, Mayfield was a Soul pioneer and a true great. . . . After a five-year battle with cancer, Boston civil rights leader Lenny Zakim also died in December. As Dan Shaughnessy wrote in the *Boston Globe*, "there's a big hole in Boston's soul today." The founder of Team Harmony, Zakim taught tolerance and was an inspiration to many. Springsteen dedicated "The Promised Land" to Zakim when the E Street Band played Boston on August 26. . . . And shifting gears, but still concerning the passing of greats: on September 13, 1999, New York's WNEW switched formats to become FM Talk 102.7. Matt Devoti closed his final show with two cuts from the E Street Band's opening night at the Meadowlands. One saving grace despite the format change: fans of Vin Scelsa can continue to hear his "Idiot's Delight" program every Sunday. ➡



## A pair of new Boss books in review

# Two Faces

By Bob Zimmerman

"My mother, you know, she used to say... he oughta be a author, he should write books. You know, 'It's a good life. You can get a little something for yourself.'"

—Bruce Springsteen  
"Growing Up"  
Live/1975-85

While Bruce Springsteen may not have chosen the profession his mother envisioned for him all those years ago, that she would live to see so many people writing as many books about her son as have been published, is even more remarkable.

At this point in his career, only the Beatles, Bob Dylan and Elvis Presley have been as written about as much as Bruce Springsteen. The question is, after so many books have been published, what new story is there to tell? Considering that the very first book written about Springsteen, Dave Marsh's *Born to Run* is regarded as the definitive word on the matter and again, one has to ask: what more is there to say?

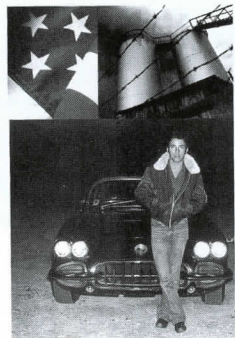
With all the activity surrounding Springsteen in 1999, it's no wonder that there are two new books chronicling his life and work. Eric Alterman's *It Ain't No Sin To Be Glad You're Alive: The Promise Of Bruce Springsteen* and Christopher Sandford's *Springsteen: Point Blank* attempt to tell the Springsteen story in very different ways. Do they shed any new light? The answer, for the most part, is no, not really.

But both authors try to tell the same story in unique ways. Alterman's book, touching lightly on topics that could use some digging, has the sense from the outset of trying to please Springsteen and Jon Landau. Sandford, on the other hand seems to try and leave no stone unturned. But then one has to wonder: Do I really need to know all of this about Bruce Springsteen?

In *It Ain't No Sin*, Alterman begins by describing a meeting

with Springsteen before the taping of the Charlie Rose interview. Alterman, introduced by Landau and wanting to keep the meeting non-intrusive, instead offers up this book as what he would have wanted to say to Springsteen. Having already lived the life Alterman writes about, Springsteen, it seems, was spared a story already often told in other (better-written) books and magazine articles.

*It ain't no sin to be glad you're alive*



*The promise of Bruce Springsteen*

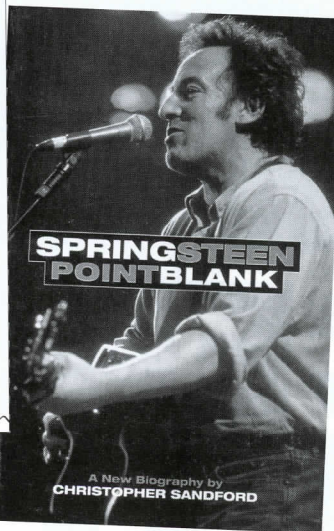
Eric Alterman

Much of *It Ain't No Sin*, though eager and inspiring, feels rushed, rehashed, cut-and-pasted. The story of Springsteen's childhood, early bands and the salvation brought to him by rock 'n' roll has been written over and over again. The same problems appear in the sections regarding Bruce's meteoric rise during both the *Born to Run* and *Born in the U.S.A.* periods: Alterman doesn't really add anything new to the story. If anything, he distills the Springsteen legend, thus turning *It Ain't No Sin* into a *Cliff's Notes* for the Bruce Springsteen story. From this standpoint, Alterman's book is probably a good place for the passive Springsteen fan (i.e. non-*Backstreets* subscriber) to start.

What Alterman does add to the Springsteen story are personal anecdotes from his own life that parallel Springsteen's career. At its best, its innocence recalls

the late 1970's book, *Growing Up With the Beatles* by Ron Schaumburg. At its worst, it causes the reader to wince.

Chris Sandford's *Springsteen: Point Blank* is a whole different ball of wax. A professional music biographer, Sandford appears to have spent a huge amount of time poring over everything ever written about Springsteen. Add to that interviews with former insiders/lenspeople Arthur Rosato, Joel Bernstein and Lynn Goldsmith among many others, and you get a jumbled paradox of



a portrait that stays away from sainthood and at least strives to present a rounded portrait of the man and the artist.

Like many books before, Sandford's *Point Blank* tells the story of Bruce's childhood and teenage years and how it shaped Bruce's world view. But Sandford's writing is sketchy at times. In talking about Springsteen's parents, Sandford writes: "Adele lived for the 9:45 a.m. Sunday mass and the sound of wedding bells at St. Rose; Doug didn't."

Sounds like Sandford counts listening to Tunnel of Love's "Walk Like a Man" as research on Springsteen's homelife.

Still, for every raised eyebrow there are interesting yarns, previously unheard. At one point while writing about Springsteen's

problems with CBS after *The Wild, the Innocent and the E Street Shuffle*, Sandford states that Springsteen's fortunes changed at the label only after a CBS President's son at Brown University read in his school newspaper that Springsteen was being treated "bad" by CBS.

After a first read through, one wonders about Sandford's obsession with Springsteen's sex life. Rather than tackling the subject in any kind of dignified manner, Sandford writes like the British tabloids, throwing out saucy anecdotes from unnamed sources, and not really providing any meaning to such revelations. If Sandford had attempted to establish a connection between Bruce's personal liaisons and his art, perhaps the author would have a leg to stand on. Instead, it cheapens the book and much of Sandford's work.

Where Sandford's book truly excels is in an area that few know much about, in the chapters that deal with Bruce Springsteen in the 1990s. While older stories of Springsteen's David going up against Goliath-like lawyers make for a more dramatic premise, Springsteen's seeming personal and professional uncertainty as he entered the '90s allow for a more realistic and ultimately satisfying read. While many of Springsteen's fans don't know what it's like to sign a bad record deal or to deal with too much "hype," the stories of a man in the middle of a mid-life professional and personal crisis resonate much more with his over-30 fan base.

Finally, whether it's true or not, reading of the various E Street Band members allegedly barraging Springsteen with requests for a reunion makes one wonder if everyone on the stage during this recent reunion tour are all there for the same reasons.

In the end, that's the problem with *Point Blank*. While it's an interesting read, one tends to take much of the information with the proverbial grain of salt. 🐷





# ACCESS: LYNN GOLDSMITH

The *Backstreets* Interview by Christopher Phillips

In 1978, photographer Lynn Goldsmith spent much of the year on the road with Bruce Springsteen—"making pictures," as she likes to say, all along the way. As Springsteen's girlfriend at the time, after being "set up" by Patti Smith [see our previous interview with Lynn in *Backstreets* #50/51] she was in the position to make some great ones. She published her first book of Bruce photos, *Springsteen*, in 1984, and her 1995 *PhotoDiary* included several choice shots of the Boss along with a plethora of other rock stars she's photographed over her career. More than 20 years down the road, as Bruce and the E Street Band are practically reliving the *Darkness* tour with their recent reunion, Goldsmith provides a look back with her second book focusing solely on Springsteen. With more unpublished photos from those '78 glory days, *Springsteen: Access All Areas* presents life on the road from start to finish, on-stage and off. In an exclusive interview, Goldsmith tells *Backstreets* some of the stories behind what she captured so compellingly on film, and about a day in the life of the *Darkness* tour.

**I'm curious to hear how your new book came about. And the changes it's gone through: One of the main things that we've heard about the book in advance is that you had planned to include one of Springsteen's letters to you, that you've since removed.**

The head of Universe Publishing, Charles Miers, said they had been rather inundated with proposals for a Springsteen book. He thought, knowing me and knowing that I had done three or four books with Universe/Rizzoli, that if they were to do a Springsteen book, it should be with me. I wanted to do it. I said yes, I'd love to do a photographic book. I said it would be very journalistic: no studio shots, but like being on the road, on the bus, back in '78. Which made sense: this was before they went on tour in 1999, but I knew there was going to be a band reunion, and to me it was a reunion of *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. So they said they wanted me to do the book.

They also asked, "can you please write about your relationship?" I said that I wasn't comfortable with that, and that I wrote just about as much as I'm going to



write in my book *PhotoDiary*—which they published. I gave it some thought, and realized that there are many people who obviously might not be aware of Lynn Goldsmith. There was a reason why I had access over a period of time. Not being comfortable saying it, but wanting to share as much of Bruce as I could, I chose one of the letters he wrote me, instead of writing myself, to illustrate that. The letter showed enough closeness, and showed that I was on the road, and I was only showing part of the letter.

#### **Tell me about that part.**

It was on notebook paper. I only showed the back page; the full letter was three pages long. It was very sweet. I didn't think there was anything that would embarrass Bruce, his wife or children. I thought it was simply a sweet letter that showed I had a romantic relationship with him that allowed me to make these pictures. That, and my talent. Other letters had things that were nobody else's business. This one said things... it said things that you knew he wrote while he was on the road, and that I was off the road at that moment. Sweet things, like, "Steve's sleeping here next to me."

#### **So what happened to letter since?**

When I came up with the idea of the letter, I said, "I don't want to do this if Bruce feels it is some sort of betrayal of privacy. I'm asking you, as the publisher, to write a letter saying that if they don't want it, I don't." [Bruce's management] had about two weeks to respond, and Charles called, and they were very busy and hadn't looked at it. He gave them another month and said that we were going to press. Finally, he sent another letter saying, "This has been going on for two months, and if I don't hear anything, I have to assume it is okay." Then the book was at the printers, I was told that Rizoli had heard back, and that [Bruce's management] didn't want this letter in there. I thought it was strange because they had been given at least a six-week period, with numerous phone calls, to respond.

Anyway, the book was at the printer when Charles called me and said, "Our lawyers say we can't put it in there now." I said that was ridiculous, but he said, "Well, we can't put the book out." And here it is, at the printer. I said fine, I'll take out the letter.

The letter was nice. It was also part of the style of the book. Although it has a few concert shots, it's personal. Part of the reason Bruce has so many devoted fans, in addition to the fact he is a talented musician, is that he makes people feel like they could be his friend. I think anything expressed in that letter is what a lot of people think when they are young and in love. So what's the big deal?

#### **Were there any other complications?**

I also cared a great deal about the printing. I picked a style for the book—I didn't want it on the coated paper. I wanted a rough, uncoated stock, for design reasons. I hemmed and hawed over it, because as a photographer, my work looks better on the glossier paper, and you get more detail. But when I work on a book, I'm thinking of who it's meant for. I always think of the books as gifts. In this case, I really wanted it to have a certain feel. That doesn't mean a glossy paper. That is not what the 1978 *Darkness on the Edge of Town* tour was like. That's my opinion.

#### **Another way to establish a tone to your book.**

Exactly. We had a longer process of proofing because I didn't like the way the inks looked—things like that. I felt that it was a step worth taking because I really wanted the book to look a certain way.

#### **So without that letter, and without much text from you, the images tell the story.**

The flow of the book is kind of like being on the road. Outside the concert hall, people coming to the concert. Going through soundcheck, all the way through the show, after the show, going off the road, going back on the road, same thing again. That's what it is.

#### **How much of the *Darkness* tour were you there for?**

Plenty of it. I was at the opening [May 23, Buffalo, NY]. I'm sorry now that I didn't go to the L.A. thing [in July], but I didn't want to. Two reasons: one, I hate the Roxy shows. He even tried convincing me. He said they were going up to the billboard.

#### **The spray-paint episode? [On July 4, 1978, Springsteen and a few E Streeters added their own graffiti to an enormous *Darkness on the Edge of Town* billboard in Los Angeles].**

Yeah, he was going to wait for me so I could come and photograph it. He knew it would be enticing for me if I could make pictures like that, but the other reason was I was embarrassed that people were starting to know I was his girlfriend. In L.A., I knew there would be a lot of press, and people would know me. *Rolling Stone* was doing a story. I felt if I was with Bruce, and *Rolling Stone* was there... I didn't want to end up in it. Stupidly, I had no idea at the time that people were really nice to me because they already *knew* I was his girlfriend. I thought they would think I was a groupie. I didn't know that if I had been flaunting it, it would have been helpful to me. I was always hiding it. My identity as a photographer was more important to me than being with the person I cared about.

#### **The different levels of fame must have made for a bizarre dynamic in your relationship, especially with the spotlight on Bruce just getting brighter during that year.**

The problem is, I am very competitive. In my mind, I was just as known as Bruce when I first met him. In the music industry, at least. I felt like he was no different than me. Then he moved to another level. A photographer can't go to that level—we aren't in front of the camera. But it's not that it didn't work out, I think it worked out the way it was supposed to. I'm sure most people think the famous person breaks up with the person who's not famous. It was me. I didn't want to be in that relationship. Being concerned about what other people thought is what made me feel that way, though, and that's what was crazy. I was always concerned about what other people thought. The only thing I regret has to do with not being there for someone who really cared about me. I don't regret losing the relationship, I just regret those moments that someone said they needed me and I wasn't there for really dumb reasons.

#### **So with Bruce in L.A. that night, where were you?**

I was in New York shooting Frankie Valli, a show for which I never got paid. There's karma for you. I got a call from Maureen, Steve's girlfriend, telling me about a girl at the hotel—they were going to be there for a week. She said I should get out there, that there was a girl that was really putting the moves on Bruce, and he's lonely... I said I wasn't coming. "I won't be seen with him in L.A." So after that, I saw him in Texas.

#### **And besides that, I take it you were on the road with the band for much of the tour. Did you travel on the bus?**

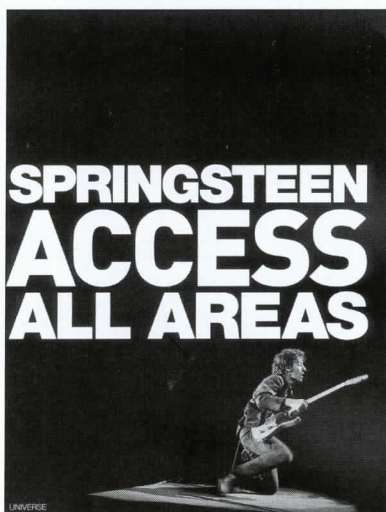
Yeah. I had my own suitcase that stayed on the road, and I lived in the back of the bus. Life was pretty much the same in every city. The difference was that in some places, I would look for things to go and shoot in the early afternoon. That's how pictures were made with him in various places. I wanted to see the Alamo: "You write about America, let's look out the window!" Bruce generally didn't want to get up and run around town, but he would.

#### **After sleeping late?**

I don't need a lot of sleep. Bruce is typical of many musicians who put out a huge amount of energy when they are performing, and as soon as the show is over, they are like dead meat, chopped liver—very exhausted. People think they "party on," but that's not the case. Basically, you get on the bus and go to a place that has really bad food, or Kentucky Fried Chicken. I was always showing Bruce pictures, and we would read and play music and fool around with the band. We'd try to sleep even though the bus shakes and rattles. When you arrive in the next city very early in the morning, if you are in a situation where you can go to a hotel for a few hours, you sleep a little bit. But soundcheck is after lunch and you never leave. It's like being in prison.

#### **Well, of course, Bruce is legendary for those intensive soundchecks—what were they like? And would you take pictures there too?**

All the time. Soundchecks were actually a lot of fun. They lasted a long time. During that same period of time, I was on the road with the Rolling Stones—I would go from the Stones to Bruce. Only I was working while with the Stones. It was two completely different worlds: they didn't even have a soundcheck, and they were the *Stones*. And Bruce had three- to four-hour soundchecks. I always wished I could







have made Super 8 movies; I thought no one would ever believe it. He used to walk all over the hall, not only to hear what the band sounded like in different seats, but what the views would be like. If he thought the view would be cut off at all, he wouldn't let them sell the seats. And no sales for anything behind the stage. I remember there were arguments with promoters and such, and he stood strong. This was the way it was, or he wouldn't do it.

So he was incredibly fanatic about what his fans would get. I've been on the road with a lot of people, and nobody cared like Bruce did. I really felt sorry for the band. I told Max I felt sorry for him every day. People thought he did long shows, but they should know that before that, up to dinner break, Max was playing drums. It was always exciting because they'd try different things with songs. They did different arrangements all the time. Just like Dylan does. Even if they didn't play it in concert, they did different stuff in soundcheck to keep it alive. Covers, too. They loved to play. Those guys loved to play with Bruce. It was quite remarkable—it was an incredible respect. I've never been with any group anywhere where I experienced anything quite like it. And that is said not because I cared about him, that's said from a very unbiased, objective place.

**What do you think brought that respect? The bond of how long they'd known each other? Respect for his talent?**

There were a few things. All of what you said is true, especially with Danny—he'd been with Bruce since high school. It was also like, in their minds, Bruce was Dylan. The only other thing that was competing at the time was Billy Joel. Billy Joel was just pop—he was good, but he didn't have the substance of Bruce, in their minds. He had a lot more mass appeal, and Bruce was going for cults. The fact that he allowed them as musicians to join in in a certain spontaneity—I think that is a real pleasure for people in bands. It's really hard to play the same thing, night after night. 99.9 percent of bands do. That is not what the E Street Band did.

**Do you still keep in touch with any of the guys in the band?**

I do. I liked them and I think they really liked me. Plus, I was somewhat of a distraction—the person who would come in and out, bringing Stones stories, stories

from the outside world. When you are on tour, it is only you. Not a lot of news. In that way, I was a breath of fresh air, so to speak. And when I was around, I was helpful in making the guys know that it's okay to come in the dressing room. I didn't have the same kind of regard for Bruce that they did.

**Do you mean they had too much regard, in a way?**

Here's an example. I had a drink with Danny. Bruce was doing an interview or something, and Danny and I were having a drink in the bar—which was secretive, because we weren't allowed to drink. Danny said he had more booze in his room. I said, "Great, let's go drink up there!" He said, "No, I can't have you in my room—Bruce would kill me." I said, "What is he going to think? I wouldn't think twice about it," but they were always worried about what Bruce might think. The funniest thing was, when I told Bruce—I said I was going to Danny's room to read magazines or something, and Danny wouldn't let me in his room. Bruce said, "He *better* not." I was like, *what?* He wasn't kidding. He was very possessive. I didn't get it. But I liked it. Was he a control freak? Was he possessive? Yeah. Did I find it adorable? Totally. It was great to be cared about like that.

**So you didn't hang out with the band members one-on-one?**

Well, I did. It was mostly—like when we were on the bus, Bruce was around. I really liked all of them. There are bonds that Max or Roy and I share because we are Jewish, but Clarence was such a warm loving presence; you always wanted him to pull you under his arm. Each person is unique, but I felt a lot for Clarence, Danny and Max.

**Back to the course of a typical day: after soundcheck, suppertime?**

There is a room where they serve dinner. It's not like today where the artists tell every last ridiculous thing they want. Bruce had very simple tastes. Simple American working-man cuisine: KFC, hamburgers. The band ate in the room. Bruce usually did not go in there to eat—he would stay in his dressing room, and his food would be brought in to him. I didn't really want that. I would sometimes go out there and eat with the band and the roadies. I liked to see people and take pictures.





**Why do you think Bruce wasn't very social? Was he nervous before a show?**

Yes. He was preparing himself. He would write things out—stories and such. Those stories he would tell during the show. He would play, practice, listen to a lot of music, sometimes sleep. But really, soundcheck would be over at six, dinner from six to seven, then the show at seven-thirty. It's not like there was a lot of time.

**During that time, the band was more laid back?**

Yeah. They might have had some rituals that I was not allowed to see, but they did the normal things, like ironing their own clothes. Bruce had someone to shine his shoes, that kind of thing. The guys would dress up like they were going out. And Bruce would check them out before going on stage.

**Inspection?**

Oh yeah.

**Anyone not make the grade? And what would be the problem?**

Too showy, too flashy, don't wear red. Oh yeah. You know the Big Man was always trying to sneak in some high fashion there. Miami Steve was pretty safe. He had a calmer approach to fashion than Clarence did—then, anyway!

**I'm picturing Bruce alone backstage, writing things out before the show. Of course, that late '70s period is legendary for how prolific Bruce was, with this overstock of great songs. I'm sure you saw him at work?**

Oh yeah, he wrote all the time. The guy always had a pen and paper. There are pictures in the book where he is in the dressing room, writing. Bruce wrote a lot on the bus. I think it was easier for him to write on the road than it was at home.

**It's funny, because when I think of *songwriting*, I generally imagine an artist at the piano, or with a guitar. But the image we should have of Bruce is really him with a notebook and a pen, isn't it?**

That is the typical Bruce. Bruce did not sit down with a guitar. Maybe after he had lyrics, or maybe he came up with stuff on the guitar once in a while, but it was about him being a writer. It was about him coming up with a movie in his head, and then turning it into a song. We would get books on the road, books of film titles, trying to find a song.

**Fans have made lists over the years of all the movie titles that have shown up in Bruce's work, like "Thunder Road."**

He didn't see the movies. Maybe he saw some, but the point is, he was like a filmmaker. He got inspired by something and got a story to go along with it. Like me being a pushy photographer. There is the story. Here is someone who cares about you... I think he made it more dramatic. But the point is, it's easy to dramatize. It's not that he was in pain to write the songs. He used real-life situations, if he had them, to create a storyline. And telling those stories on-stage—it was incredible. He was the best storyteller. He is a raconteur, he truly is. He just really worked on that aspect in his writing.

In his mind, he had this vision of what he thought rock 'n' roll should be. I know he had a mental picture of what it was to be a rock and roll star. I think that mental picture was very much shaped by his respect for Bob Dylan. Which is interesting, because people don't think of Dylan as a rock star. Bruce did, obviously.

**You do keep coming back to Dylan.**

It was one of the things that bonded Bruce and me. We are the same age, and we were very much affected by Bob Dylan. We would buy these photo books on Bob. I would try to make Bruce's hair like Bob, we would dress him up like Bob. He studied Bob. There was a *conscious* study of Bob Dylan. Certain shirts—we would go look for them. And it was out of great respect, respect for being able to do certain things lyrically. I had a college education that Bruce didn't. I would ask Bruce, have you read this? He hadn't, so he would go out and read whatever it was voraciously. I think that had to do with the desire to write: He knew Bob was well-read. And in order to be more like Bob, you have to write. That should be number one. His music was derivative.





**You mention being a “pushy photographer” as the seed of a story—last time you talked to *Backstreets*, you told us that you were an inspiration for “Point Blank.”**

And “The Ties That Bind.” Listen to the words. Unless he changed them. I wasn’t happy about them—about a girl pushing everyone out of her way, not caring about the ties that bind? It’s not something to be proud of.

**Is there anything happier on *The River* that you might have had something to do with?**

I hate to admit this, but I never bought his records. I don’t really want to know. I’d have to listen to it. It doesn’t matter because they are influenced by a lot of things, and also influenced by the things he was listening to.

**And what was that at the time?**

All the old stuff. Bo Diddley, major influence. Bruce gave me a mix tape that we played over and over. It was an incredible compilation: Screaming Jay Hawkins, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Martha and the Vandellas. Major connection to “Dancing in the Streets.” Speaking of influences, here’s something interesting that I didn’t put in the book. This guy used to come to the *Darkness* shows and sit in the front a lot; he came to quite a few. Then I went to see *his* show. I said, “Bruce, you better go and see Tom Petty’s new show.” Tom picked so much stuff off of Bruce. Big time. Bruce did this thing where he would come out from behind Miami Steve. Then he’d do the “shhh” thing with his finger—Tom Petty started doing the same thing. And he’d do these moves—like, did you go to the Springsteen school of dance? I do love Tom Petty. People get stuff from all kinds of places.

**Something else Bruce did was go out into the audience—which he’s still doing, on the new tour. Your book has some great shots of that.**

I know people are into it now, but when he started doing it back then, people didn’t know what to do. All the artists I shot, they were afraid to go in the audience. When Bruce did it, the *audience* was afraid. In the beginning—look at their faces!—they didn’t know what to do. Should they sit there? They didn’t know then—that’s in the pictures.

**The photo of Bruce at the wheel—do you remember where you were headed on that day?**

Sure. We were in New Jersey. That particular shot was taken very early in the morning, he picked me up really early and was taking me to a flea market. Bruce really loved his Corvette. When he would come back from being on the road, he just liked to go for drives and put the top down—just like in all the songs. He really enjoyed that.

**I understand why you didn’t include more text in the book, but it’s fascinating to get some of the stories behind the images. What else comes to mind?**

There is a shot of Bruce where the venue is behind him, and this is after soundcheck. During dinner, I think, but before people got there—could be before soundcheck. To get Bruce to walk around was almost impossible: he would save up all his energy, and he didn’t even want to walk. I got him to walk around this whole place. It was big. We hadn’t really played places big like that. When the book opens, it starts in Buffalo, a little tiny marquee. At the end is a big coliseum. Anyway, I asked him to walk around the outside, I wanted him to see where people were coming from in their cars. I had to drag the poor guy. Once he did it, he really was affected—I think he wanted to keep it small in his mind, but it became so big, just in that year.

There are pictures during soundcheck with Jimmy Iovine in them. Iovine had been Bruce’s engineer, but he was, by this point, a record producer. He came out at the beginning of the tour, then sometime during the middle to check sound. You can see Iovine giving direction to the drums. I asked, “Why do you fly all the way out here to do a stupid soundcheck?” He said, “I will always do that for Bruce.” This is also the guy whom Bruce thought didn’t have the chops to be a producer, and Jimmy knew that. He never held that against Bruce.

**Was Bruce happy with Iovine’s work on *Darkness*?**

Yeah, but as an engineer, not a producer. When Patti Smith chose Jimmy as her producer, he hadn’t produced anything. Then I tried pushing Bruce to let Jimmy produce, because I thought he knew a lot. Bruce didn’t like him as a producer back then, and I said, “Well, he produced Patti’s album!” But Jimmy’s grateful.



### How about taking us through other photos?

The beginning of the book, you see Bruce with his hand over his face. That's in New Jersey before going on the road. See the white stuff in his pocket? Notepaper. Always ready. So the book starts before the tour. You get pictures of Bruce taking pictures, then him on the bed in the Navarro hotel in New York, where he basically wrote *Darkness* and probably stuff from *The River* too. He'd leave only to go to New Jersey, only to relax. He was like a working man. It was a pit of creativity—pit being the key word. Magazines, tapes, everything. The cleaning people were never allowed in.

Then you see him outside the tour bus; you see the band in New Jersey; at rehearsal; at soundcheck; a performance at a small place; autographs. There are pictures of Bruce signing autographs backstage, and there's one of him sitting in the back of a normal car, where the fans are coming through the window with things to sign. Bruce would never ever go in a limousine—not ever. He would either have a normal car, or take a taxi, or a friend with a van, but he was really against ever getting in a limousine. You can tell in the photo.

There's the band on the streets of New York. When we pulled up at one place in the morning, you see Bruce eating one of those McDonald's breakfast sandwiches. This is what he looked like really early in the morning. A picture of the suitcase; trying on different outfits; on-stage, different viewpoints.

Clarence with his knee wrapped—he had problems with his knees because he always went down on his knees for that solo. Even then, he wasn't a young guy. He really had a lot of pain after the shows.

There is one backstage shot that's kind of out of focus—some nights were really amazing. Bruce was sopping wet after shows, clothes drenched. You would think he had stood out in a torrential rainstorm. Not just heavy sweat. I was also jealous of this because it meant he could lose weight easily. Anyway, no one came into Bruce's dressing room. But Clarence busts open the door, and grabs Bruce—he was the only one who would do that.

Then you see Bruce on the bus, then with the cops. We were pulled over. He was Bruce Springsteen, so he didn't get a ticket.

You get off the road, you go to the flea market, Steve comes over. There is a shot of Bruce in his living room, that's typical: spacing out, watching TV. Bruce's birthday. Shots with his mom at Madison Square Garden [August 23, 1978]. I had forgotten where that show was. I went back to my diaries—I wrote dates, but not where. I read it in your magazine to remember where I was.

### Did you get pressure from the publisher to put stories and commentary like this in the book?

Yep. I said no. I wanted people to have pictures. I wanted it to be a picture book. The point is, my version doesn't matter. All that matters is that a lot of people who have a strong feeling about Bruce are connected in some way to that time period. I'm just giving them another visual viewpoint to reignite those feelings. That's why I wanted to include concert pictures. What people remember are those shows. I'm someone that doesn't publish them a lot. Sure, they want a taste of the private Bruce, but at those shows they were one with him. I was in certain positions that they couldn't be in: I was on the stage. Just like when you hear certain music, it takes you back to a place in time. Hopefully, the pictures will do that for people who feel that way.

### What do you think made the *Darkness* period so special?

Until that time, even during the *Darkness* time, Bruce really never had a hit single. People who bought the albums were devotees. They were spreading the word. It is a time many musicians have, and when they reach a certain level of success, it gets lost. I went to one show during the *Born in the U.S.A.* period. The lights were computerized: Bruce had to move to the place where the lights were. It cut out a kind of spontaneity—it was no longer

the same show. Once I saw that, I said, "I saw it when it was." Not that what they were doing wasn't good, but it wasn't that flame of the *Darkness* period.

### Did you—honestly—ever get sick of the show?

Never, never. Remember, I was not a Bruce fan before I met him. I hadn't even heard of him. I, like any other person who went to a show, realized, hey, that guy is great. When you see shows night after night with Bruce, and you can see that level of greatness.... I remember one time when he was singing "Independence Day"—I started thinking about my own father. It was so powerful that night that I was just sobbing and crying. That doesn't happen to me. I just really felt as a performer, he was so in the moment, and he was consistently there. It was so impressive to me. I really had incredible respect for him because of that. His ability to put everything out of his consciousness except being the best he could be for these people, that meant a lot to me. I've seen too many artists, even then, that didn't care about their fans. Bruce really did. 🐾

For more on Springsteen: Access All Areas and her other work, visit Goldsmith's website at [www.lynngoldsmith.com](http://www.lynngoldsmith.com).



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U.S. TOUR 1999  
PART TWO

# THE MINISTRY OF ROCK 'N' ROLL

HAVING COMPLETED THE MARATHON 34-show first leg of their reunion tour of the U.S.A. in Chicago on September 30, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band took a two-week break before commencing the second leg in Phoenix. Comprising a further 18 shows, this section of the tour also included stops in Los Angeles, Oakland, Fargo, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Columbus, Buffalo, Albany, and Minneapolis. Additional shows rumored at the time but which failed to materialize included an appearance in Portland on October 29, a Halloween night concert in Los Angeles (which would have been Bruce's third in that city, following from the memorable 1980 and 1984 gigs), a handful of pre-Christmas shows in the first half of December (with Pittsburgh and Long Island's Nassau Coliseum among the suggested locations) and a New Year's Eve concert at the Meadowlands Arena.

The subject of months of discussion and speculation among fans, the prospect of Bruce entering the new millennium onstage in New Jersey was an irresistible one. Among the believers were the staff of one Cleveland radio station, who offered an all-expenses paid trip to the concert as first prize in a competition, conveniently ignoring the total lack of any official confirmation. In reality, the odds were always against it. Bruce has only played a handful of official New Year's Eve concerts in the 27 years since he signed with Columbia (Philadelphia in 1975, Cleveland in 1978 and the celebrated "longest-ever" show at

BY MIKE SAUNDERS



Uniondale, NY, in 1980) and none of these has taken place in New Jersey. Undeniably a great idea on paper, the prohibitive cost of hiring the arena for that particular night and the inevitable problem of scalpers charging astronomical prices may have influenced Bruce's eventual decision to stay home, presuming he had seriously considered the idea in the first place.

The Minneapolis concerts had originally been scheduled for November 3 and 4, but were postponed until after the Thanksgiving holiday when Patti Scialfa suffered a perforated eardrum. She missed the next seven shows, recovering at home while Bruce and the band played the stretch from Fargo to Buffalo. Her absence brought about many temporary changes. Garry Tallent moved into Patti's position onstage and was persuaded to step up to the microphone himself on occasion, usually during "Out in the Street." Nightly alternates "Mansion on the Hill" and "Factory" were replaced by "My Hometown," before which Bruce would explain his wife's predicament and promise that "the boys are gonna do their best for ya!" Bruce and Nils took care of Patti's vocal parts in "If I Should Fall Behind," while "Ramrod" moved into last place after "Land of Hope and Dreams" and became a tour-de-force of (in Bruce's words) "dirty rock and roll," with several false endings and a somersault to finish. While not belittling Patti's contribution to the show, there was undoubtedly a different atmosphere onstage while she was away. The E Street Band line-up now closely resembled the classic 1975-81 version, Little Steven had an increased role and Bruce appeared noticeably looser without Patti's steadying influence. Those seven shows represent a unique, albeit brief, period in E Street history.

Modest by comparison to the previous leg, (with its month-long New Jersey residency and multiple nights in Boston and Philadelphia), this six-week roadtrip included a string of one-night stands—the first of the U.S. tour. For these appearances, Bruce tended to stick to the script much more often, performing a standard set with few notable variations. As usual, the alternate choices and other surprises came in those cities where he played more than one show. Here, "Racing in the Street" would occupy the "Jungleland"/"Backstreets" slot; "Point Blank" or "Independence Day" would replace "The River"; and the standard opener "The Ties That Bind" would give way to "Adam Raised a Cain," "Don't Look Back" or "Take 'Em as They Come." Also getting occasional airings on alternate nights were "Trapped," "Because the Night," "She's the One," "Cadillac Ranch" and "Spirit in the Night." Among the once-only performances on this leg were "Red Headed Woman" (in Minneapolis), "For You," "Incident on 57th Street" and "This Hard Land" (all in Los Angeles).

Perhaps partly due to the general lack of recognition given to material from *Tracks* in the U.S.A., Bruce began performing these songs less frequently and dropped some from the set completely in favor of older songs. Thus, "Rendezvous," "I Wanna Be With You" and "Loose

Ends" were absent on this part of the tour, while recent non-*Tracks* additions "Growin' Up," "Blinded by the Light" and "Downbound Train" made several appearances.

Only four songs made their live or tour debut, though all were particularly notable: Sam and Dave's "Soul Man" in Phoenix; "The Promise" (with Bruce alone on piano) in Los Angeles; "Sinaloa Cowboys" in Oakland, and the inevitable but very welcome "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" in Minneapolis. In Cleveland, "No Surrender" (first played in the full-band electric version at Meadowlands) debuted with a reworked pedal steel-based arrangement, while new cover versions slotted into "Light of Day" included the Beach Boys' "Surfin' USA" in Los Angeles, Moby Grape's "Omaha" in Oakland and the McCoy's "Hang On Sloop" in Columbus.

There were also two guest appearances. Soul legend Sam Moore joined Bruce for the aforementioned "Soul Man," while Southside Johnny, who attended two of the New Jersey shows but didn't sing, finally made it onstage for "Hungry Heart" in Oakland, which many viewed as a wasted opportunity. ("The Fever" would have been a more appropriate choice, given the fact that the song's composer, producer and best-known lead vocalist were all sharing a stage at the time).

"Are you ready for the last show of the century?" asked Bruce at the beginning of the second night in Minneapolis (and the 88th show of the world tour), finally laying to rest the New Year's Eve debate. This last show of the millennium was bookended with "My Love Will Not Let You Down" and "Land of Hope and Dreams," the same two songs which had opened and closed the first show of the tour in Barcelona, back in April. "Santa Claus" kicked off the second set of encores, complete with Christmas tree, colored lights around the risers, and an appearance by Santa and his five elves (among them Chuck Plotkin) dispensing candy canes. "Fun was the dominant vibe," reported the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. "It's hard to imagine more smiles onstage at a Springsteen concert. There were plenty of hugs, too."

As the night drew to a close, Bruce announced, "we'll be back out for some more shows... in the early part of next year." Interviewed by the *Star Tribune*, Little Steven had no information about future plans, but said, "I can't imagine everyone going separate ways." Jon Landau later confirmed that the Y2K leg of the reunion tour will visit cities in Canada and previously-neglected areas of the U.S. but also stressed that any tour plans would take into account Max Weinberg and Little Steven's TV commitments. While this should keep the band on the road for at least another couple of months, the long-term future is less certain. Bruce is reportedly eager to get back in the studio with the E Street Band. An Australian tour which was apparently "all but confirmed" for March has been put on hold. The same applies to a rumored series of stadium concerts in Europe. As ever, nothing is definite at this point. Only one man knows for sure, and he's probably still undecided!

## AMERICA WEST PHOENIX, AZ

OCTOBER 15

**10/15 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Incorporated/Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day//Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Soul Man/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

**10/15 NOTES:** Special guest Sam Moore joins in during the encores for the one-off of "Soul Man." During "Working on the Highway," Bruce hands his acoustic to an air-guitarist in the front of the crowd, who gets to play a few licks before passing it back. This guitar hand-off will become a regular feature at subsequent shows.

**SOUL MAN:** Generally, I was somewhat disappointed. The sound wasn't that great—there didn't appear to be a good mixing job, and the individual instruments didn't stand out. I felt removed from the show. Makes me wonder if they did a soundcheck. The set seemed to lack any spontaneity, and the crowd wasn't as enthusiastic as I would have expected. Plus no songs from *Tracks*! There were two real highlights, however. First, the playing of "Meeting Across the River," and second, Sam Moore coming out for the second encore to sing "Soul Man" with Bruce—really great. —Phil Stanley

## STAPLES CENTER LOS ANGELES, CA

4 NIGHTS

OCTOBER 17  
LOS ANGELES / NIGHT 1

**10/17 SOUNDHECK:** Includes an instrumental "Pink Cadillac," plus "Janey, Don't You Lose Heart" and "Loose Ends."

**10/17 SETLIST:** My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/You Can Look/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day//Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

**10/17 NOTES:** Springsteen and the E Street Band open the brand new Staples Center. "Born in the U.S.A.," as with all performances on this U.S. tour, is played solo acoustic. "Light of Day" incorporates the Rivas' "California Sun." In the star-studded crowd: Jennifer Love Hewitt, Jay Mohr, Calista

**TOUR REPORT COMPILED  
BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS**





Flockhart, Danny Devito and Rhea Pearlman, Joe Pantoliano, Daniel Stern, Chris Isaak, Bob Clearmountain, Tom Hanks, Steven Spielberg, Rob Reiner, Peter Marshall, Pete Sampras, Ben Stiller, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Jack Nicholson.

**PRESS:** "REBORN TO RUN." Ben Wener in the *Orange County Register*: Let's not mince words: It was the best show of the year. By far....

The hype had been high for months, coming off a well-received debut in Spain and a reportedly thrilling run on the East Coast, including umpteen nights at New Jersey's Meadowlands Arena. (Best sign seen all night: the frat boys behind the stage with the scroll "Meadowlands Arena West.")

Would this live up to expectations? How about it surpassed them by leaps and bounds? Springsteen proved for perhaps the first time ever that a reunion tour can go well beyond musty nostalgia to become a fresh, vital celebration of greatness....

**BENEATH PEACEFUL SKYBOXES:** Clarence says, "Brothers and sisters, all rise" in a deep voice, and Bruce does the "Are you ready?... You better get ready" sung intro. "There's goin' to be a meeting in the town tonight, people," he sings. After "The Promised Land," Bruce went into what, by the standards of this tour, proved a phenomenally long speech, including

a mini-rant regarding the corporate boxes at the new venue: "They are supposed to be skyboxes, not medium-low boxes. If you are in the skyboxes, it's important to come out of your room and watch the show. They call them skyboxes for a reason. They are supposed to be up high. That's why I don't play private parties any more." And he dedicated "Mansion on the Hill" to those in the skyboxes.

In the "Light of Day" rap, a new word after "retropsychedelicized" is added: "Pokemonized." —Steven Svoboda

## OCTOBER 18 LOS ANGELES / NIGHT 2

**10/18 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Trapped/Darlington County/Factory/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Where the Bands Are/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Jungleland/Light of Day//Cadillac Ranch/Hungry Heart/Born to Run //Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Spirit in the Night/Land of Hope and Dreams

**10/18 NOTES:** "Light of Day" again includes "California Sun" and finds people "lost in their cell phones, lost in the skyboxes, lost on the freeway."

**HOLDING IT TOGETHER:** More poking fun tonight: "Welcome, office supply lovers. We have a new building here. I told folks last night that I thought I was playing at the Staples Store for a while. For a while I thought the Staples Center might have been named after Pops Staples or something. But no, it's an office supply store. They must have named it after staples—they hold things together. They are strong, and simple, and fundamentally useful. I kinda liked that... Maybe they named it that because they sold so many staples... They told me not to worry about the skyboxes. They are planning for an alteration. This side (pointing to the left) will all be Starbucks, and this side (pointing to the right) will be housing for downsized executives."

Bruce dedicated "The Ghost of Tom Joad" to Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson [whose book *Journey to Nowhere* inspired some of *The Ghost of Tom Joad*]. He added another dedication, like last night, to the L.A. Community Regional Food Bank.

Bruce called an audible in the second encore, and the band did the night's real surprise, "Spirit in the Night." Well, he *did* seem to be in a good mood tonight. —Steven Svoboda

MARC SHAPIRO PHOTO



## OCTOBER 21 LOS ANGELES / NIGHT 3

**10/21 SOUNDCHECK:** Includes a string of Beach Boys songs: "Surfin' U.S.A.," "California Girls," and "Do It Again."

**10/21 SETLIST:** Don't Look Back/Adam Raised a Cain/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/The Promised Land/Atlantic City/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/You Can Look/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Racing in the Street/Light of Day/This Hard Land/Ramrod/Born to Run//Growin' Up/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

**10/21 NOTES:** Two verses of "Surfin' U.S.A." are included in "Light of Day." "Sinola Cowboys" is on the setlist but not played. The sole performance of "This Hard Land" on this leg.

**SWOOSH STEVE?:** Before "Mansion," Bruce continued his gentle derision toward corporate entities by saying he tried to meet Mr. Staples, but couldn't find him, even in the sky boxes. And soon even cities will be changed to corporate names: "Miami will be known as the Nike swoosh. No name, just the swoosh. Like the Artist formerly known as Prince, it'll be the city formerly known as Miami." During the fun Beach Boys bit, Bruce laughed and sang "I don't even know the words to this next part." Other than that, not too much chit-chat, just another good solid rock 'n' roll show. —George A. Paul

crowd: Edward Norton, Paul Reiser.

**TAKE ONE MOMENT:** Closing night stands alone if only for the Bruce's rendering of "The Promise," solo on the grand piano. There are moments that transcend the best of Bruce's shows and last in our memories for years; this was one of those moments. But it was not a one-rarity-makes-the-night performance. From the opening "Take 'Em as They Come," you could tell that Bruce was in a spirited mood. The sing-along crowd responded like an impassioned church choir bent on converting the few unbelievers in the room. Other high-lights of this superb main set were a wrenching "Independence Day," plus the pairing of "Incident on 57th Street" and "For You" that took me back a couple of decades. —Bob Venable

### LORD OF THE STAGE:

This crowd was much wilder than the previous Staples shows. Bruce said he was playing a "request" before launching into an emotionally resonant "Incident." Soon came another real surprise: "I'm gonna try something I haven't done in a long time—play piano," Bruce said with a nervous laugh.

"I need some quiet here." After doing a quick soundcheck, he did a heartbreaking take on "The Promise." When the final notes of "Land of Hope and Dreams" finished, the crowd was so wild that Bruce gave one of those stern looks and you just knew he was gonna do one more. And "Blinded By the Light" was magic. Bruce was hopping and dancing around like he was in *Riverdance* or something. I think he could've easily continued. —George A. Paul

*Handwritten notes:*  
 Endro B  
 Falcon  
 Ties  
 20's  
 Adam  
 Darkness  
 (Promised Land)  
 Factory  
 Every Day  
 Youngstown  
 Murder  
 Bad  
 Out  
 10th  
 Incident  
 Ferga  
 (Because of My)  
 Glad  
 (The Promise)  
 Backstreet  
 Light  
 Bruce  
 (Ed)  
 Back Run  
 The Rd  
 Fall  
 Land  
 R. Ted

## OAKLAND ARENA OAKLAND, CA 3 NIGHTS

### OCTOBER 25 OAKLAND / NIGHT 1

**10/25 SOUNDCHECK:** Includes several takes of "Jackson Cage."

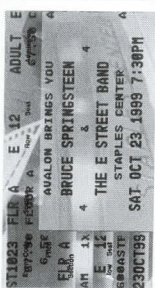
**10/25 SETLIST:** My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Where the Bands Are/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

**PRESS:** "THE BOSS IS STILL IN CHARGE." Craig Marine in the *San Francisco Examiner*: ...If there was any drawback to the show, it was that maybe Springsteen seems cursed by having to play at least three hours. It works if you keep the good songs coming, but if part of the time is used stretching songs that are perhaps mediocre to begin with, like "Working on the Highway," then play a shorter set....

The high point of the night was an incredible "Meeting Across the River"/"Jungleland" combination that was absolutely luminescent. Springsteen brought as much passion to the song as if he had written it yesterday, and all of the imagery of the song came to life in his voice.

Only this group of musicians could have created that sound, and that was reason enough for them to get back together. They may not be able to tour much longer before the shock factor starts taking over, but this time around, it still works.

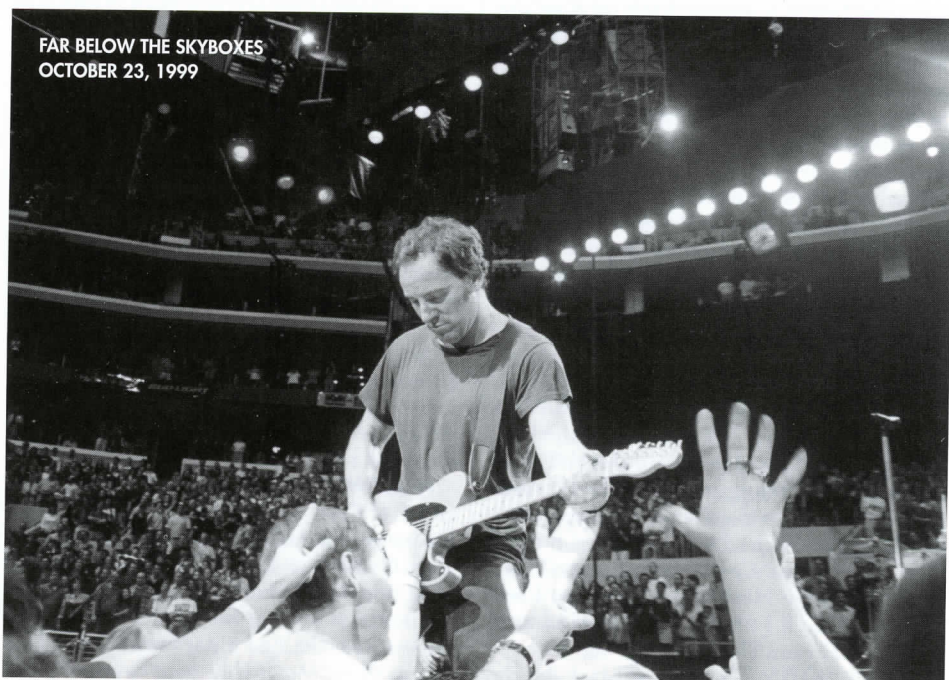
## OCTOBER 23 LOS ANGELES / NIGHT 4



**10/23 SETLIST:** Take 'Em as They Come/The Ties That Bind/Two Hearts/Adam Raised a Cain/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Factory/Independence Day/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Incident on 57th Street/For You/The Ghost of

Tom Joad/The Promise/Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Blinded by the Light

**10/23 NOTES:** An amazing setlist for closing night includes both "Incident on 57th Street" and the tour premiere of "The Promise," last performed at the tour warm-up in Asbury Park. "Because the Night" and "Glory Days" are on the setlist but not played. "California Sun" is played one last time in "Light of Day." In the



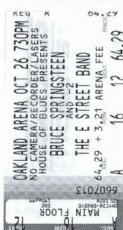
FAR BELOW THE SKYBOXES  
OCTOBER 23, 1999

MARC SHAPIRO PHOTO



**DOWN IN JUNGLELAND:** Bruce remarked, "It's nice to be in a building named after the city of Oakland. Every place we go, we're in the First Bank Center, Pizza Hut Center.... The corporate naming of public buildings is everywhere. For example, the Staples Center." This show was fairly pedestrian, especially compared to the last L.A. show, which preceded this one by only two days. Tonight was the expected A-list, adding "Meeting Across the River" into "Jungleland." But who's complaining? Not I. Bruce called an audible for "Meeting," which included some nice piano by Roy and lovely vocals. Next came "Jungleland," of course, and it may have been the best "Jungleland" I have ever seen. —*Steven Svoboda*

## OCTOBER 26 OAKLAND / NIGHT 2



**10/26 SOUNDHECK:** Includes "Omaha" and "Sinaloa Cowboys."

**10/26 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Trapped/Darlington County/Factory/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth

Avenue Freeze-out/You Can Look/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Racing in the Street/Light of Day/Cadillac Ranch/Hungry Heart/Born to Run/Growin' Up/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

**10/26 NOTES:** As a treat for the Bay Area, "Light of Day" adds a bit of Moby Grape's "Omaha." Bruce begins working "It Takes Two" into the end of "Two Hearts."

**FLASHBACK:** At the close of "Two Hearts," Springsteen let fly a few lines of Marvin Gaye's "It Takes Two" to the delight of Steven and Patti. Bruce made strong eye contact during the evening with what one must assume were some old buddies; during "Light of Day" he busted into two verses of Moby Grape's "Omaha" only after looking to his left several times before, during and after the tune. A grey-bearded, stocky fellow at side stage right, about the same age as Springsteen, pumped his fists in the air a whole bunch. Bruce's high school band, the Castiles, used to do that tune—a January '68 Castiles performance of "Omaha" may be heard on an "import" disc—so this was really special. —*Johnny Savage*

## OCTOBER 28 OAKLAND / NIGHT 3

**10/28 SETLIST:** Adam Raised a Cain/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/The Promised Land/Atlantic City/Mansion on the Hill/Independence Day/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Sinaloa Cowboys/Backstreets/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Ramrod/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Blinded By the Light

**10/28 NOTES:** Closing night includes the

tour premiere of "Sinaloa Cowboys," a rare "Atlantic City," and Southside Johnny guesting on "Hungry Heart." "Light of Day" includes "Boom Boom."

**PRESS:** "BRUUUUUUCCCCCE!" Tim Quirk in the *Bay Insider*: There should be a law. Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band should be the only rock and roll group in the world allowed to play arenas. Big stadiums are terrible places to see bands. The sound is awful. The crowds are annoying. Sidelines that make perfect sense for sporting events turn out to stink for rock concerts. And they turn off the beer taps at like 10pm or something.

I saw Springsteen last Thursday at the Arena in Oakland. How bad were our seats? We were sitting so high we could actually touch the stadium ceiling, and so far to stage left that giant speakers blocked our view of anything happening stage right.... Nonetheless, I had a good time. Actually, I had an amazing time. I had an uplifting, soul-stirring, faith-in-rock-and-roll-restoring time. And so did the 10,000 other balding white guys who went, and our 10,000 wives.

Bruce is like that. He rips the icy, cynical heart right out of your chest and replaces it with something that looks like what the Wizard of Oz gives to the Tin Man. And he does it the old-fashioned way: by simply being 1,000 times better than anyone you've ever seen....

In the end, my bad seat seemed almost necessary for a full appreciation of the event. Whenever you get several thousand people in one place pumping their fists and singing in unison, you need someone on the sidelines clucking his tongue derisively. Somebody has to point his binoculars at the stage and note that these perfect musical moments are coming courtesy of a TelePrompTer set in the stage at the Boss' feet. Somebody has to bring a friend along who amends killer lines like, "take a knife and cut this pain from my heart," to "cut this wallet from my pocket," especially when two terrible seats set you back \$150, not including the cost of parking in a stadium lot full of BMW's and Mercedes. In other words, someone has to point out that these priceless rock and roll moments actually come at a cost—beautiful as they are, and broad-based as their appeal might seem, they're still not exactly universal.

Somebody has to do those things. And sometimes that somebody has to fight every bone in his body to keep from going, "whoah-oh-oh-oh" along with everybody else when the stadium lights come on during "Born to Run." Because if this somebody can do that, and still go home happy, then it's just possible that somebody like Bruce Springsteen can astound thousands of people at once and actually leave the world a better place when he's finished.

**NO PEACE NO REST:** Bruce dedicated "The Ghost of Tom Joad" to California Rural Legal Assistance. I actually used to work for CRLA; then-California Governor Ronald Reagan unsuccessfully tried to defund and destroy that organization during his term in office. For some reason he had a particular vengeance against them. Might have been because CRLA

developed a practice of always naming him as a defendant in their class action lawsuits. CRLA was also the organization Bruce sponsored in Fresno on the *Joad* tour, 10/23/96.

After this song, Bruce was tuning up solo; what would come next? Another surprise, possibly designed to fit the CRLA dedication: "Sinaloa Cowboys." The song was arranged similarly to "Joad," starting off solo acoustic, with Nils coming in on pedal steel and Garry on upright bass, Max on brushes, Clarence on tambourine, Roy on piano, and Danny on organ and accordion. Bruce played this wonderful mariachi-esque bridge and returned to that style at the end of the song. The organ background was beautiful.

For the first encore, Bruce said, "Ladies and gentlemen, a great citizen of New Jersey is with us tonight: Southside Johnny!" My hopes for "All the Way Home," "The Fever," etc., were dashed as we got another "Hungry Heart." Southside sang the third verse and chorus, then he and Little Steven sang the fourth verse and chorus together—Southside really seemed happy to be there, chatting with his old buddy Steve. —*Steven Svoboda*

## FARGO DOME FARGO, ND

### NOVEMBER 6



**11/6 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Darlington County/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Ave Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

**11/6 NOTES:** Patti Scialfa, suffering from a perforated eardrum, is absent from this show, not to return until Albany. The Minneapolis concerts, originally scheduled after Oakland, were postponed due to her injury, but in Fargo the show must go on. It finds Garry stepping up for some background vocals, and Nils taking over Patti's part in "Fall Behind." The show also brings the U.S. tour premiere of "My Hometown" (played previously only in Madrid), for a total of five songs from *Born in the U.S.A.*

**YAH, SURE, YOU BETCHA:** Tonight the E Street Band was an all-guys band again. Bruce said Patti's perforated eardrum happened on a plane. The setlist with one exception was the standard A list; the performance was about 9.5 for passion and sheer enjoyment. Bruce put "My Hometown" in the "Factory"/"Mansion" slot, and it worked wonderfully. The Fargo crowd dug it; when the refrain switched to "your hometown" there was a huge response, and it was great hearing that song again.

For the hometown crowd, the travelogue in "Light of Day" went over like gangbusters.





PAUL JAY PLUTZER PHOTO

When Bruce got to Fargo, he really milked it. "Fargo"—huge response. "North Dakota"—huge response. "Fargo"—huge response. "North Dakota"—huge response. "I've been to Fargo!"—going crazy. "Fargo North Da-ko-ta!"—crazy, crazy, crazy. At the end, he did say "We'll see you again."

The yahoo factor was lower—at least where I was sitting—than at any other show on this tour. I guess a pin could have dropped and no one would have known, but during "Tom Joad" it was quiet, with no one getting up to leave; quiet, as in intense, appreciative listening. I'd really love to see the ticket-selling demographics on this show. As I boarded my connecting flight to Fargo, a guy noticed my *Backstreets* shirt and said, "Well, I guess I know where you're going!" He was coming from L.A., and once we started talking, people up and down the little plane jumped in, saying "Yeah, we're coming from Des Moines" and wherever, of 21 people on that flight, 14 were flying in for the show. In my section of the will-call line, there was a couple from Vancouver, WA (who drove); a couple from Ames, IA; a person from Nebraska; two Californians; and me. In my row, as I talked to some folks from Fargo,

someone behind me started talking about traffic on the D.C. Beltway! —Bob Crane

## BRADLEY CENTER MILWAUKEE, WI

NOVEMBER 9

11/9 SETLIST: Same as Fargo, except with "The Promised Land" in place of "Darlington" and "Cadillac Ranch" in place of "Hungry Heart."

11/9 NOTES: "Growin' Up" and "Lucky Town" are on the setlist but not played. No Patti.

**PRESS:** "SPRINGSTEEN BAPTIZES FAITHFUL IN FIERY SHOW." Dave Tianen in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: "...a remarkably intense, high-energy show, nearly three hours long and pulsating with runaway power.... Maturity gives the Rustbelt anthems of blue-collar entrapment like "Youngstown" and "The River" a sense of fatalism and despair the young Springsteen could only hint at. Now it's like hearing "Independence Day" from the

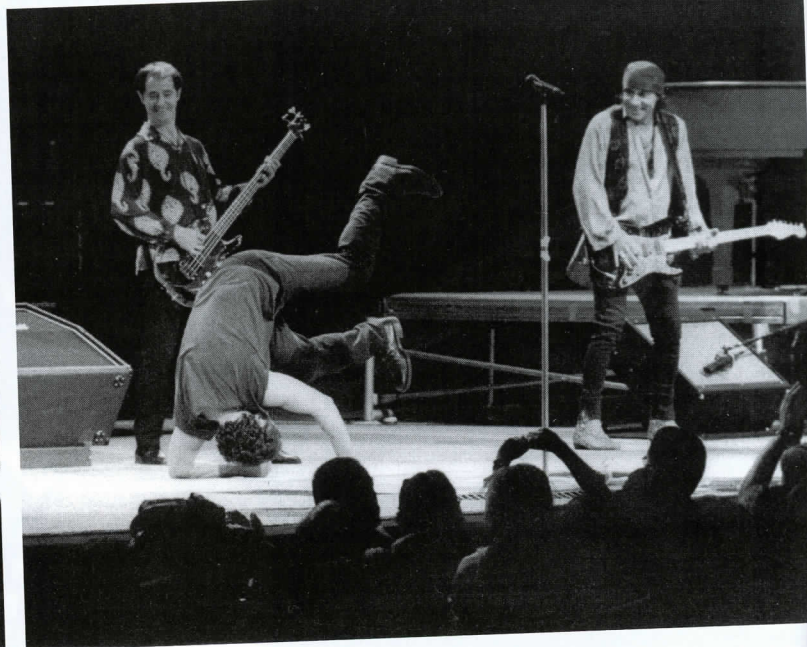
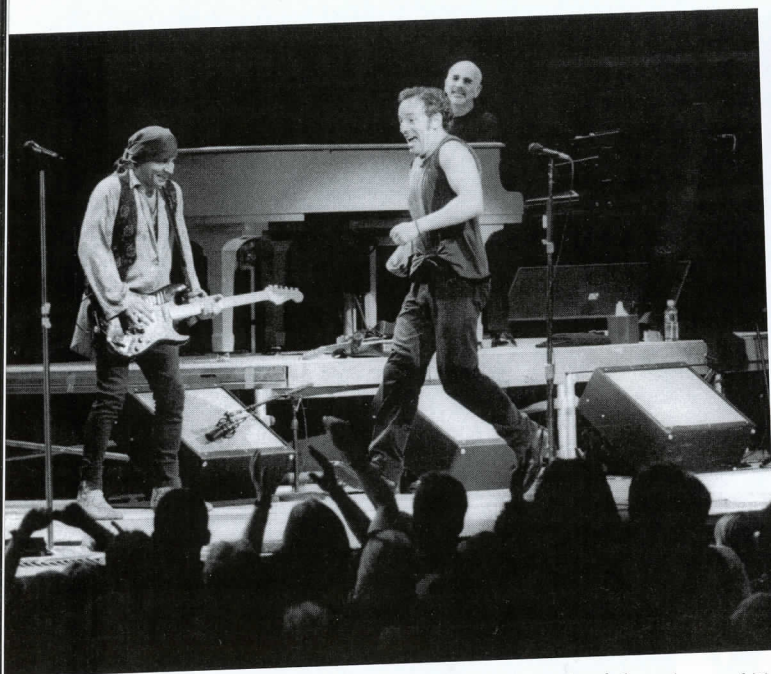
father's perspective.

This is an unconventional show for such a high-profile tour. Minimal staging. A set list that's happy to veer off familiar paths. An emotional flow that turns from exhilaration to poignancy and back again. It is that most unexpected of surprises: a mega-event worthy of the anticipation.

**MILWAUKEE'S BEST:** Just when I thought I had seen it all on this tour, Bruce and "the legendary E Street Band" surprised me all night. The set list was rather standard except for an intense "My Hometown" which leaned to the somber side, but there was an unusually warm feeling in the air throughout the night. Everybody in the band was noticeably more relaxed and jovial than usual from beginning to end, and Clarence was downright gleeful! After his new, cool "Brothers and sisters, all rise" open-

*Intro - (Come up!)*  
*Pics -*  
*Fire -*  
*20's -*  
*Darling -*  
*Darling -*  
*My Hometown -*  
*River -*  
*Youngstown -*  
*Mer -*  
*Badlands -*  
*Out -*  
*10th -*  
*Workin' -*  
*Ghosts -*  
*USA -*  
*Singh -*  
*Livin' -*  
*Cadillac -*  
*Billy Jean -*  
*Born -*  
*Hotel -*  
*Fall -*  
*Land of Hope -*





ing command at Bruce's microphone, the Big Man was bouncing all over the place on his side of the stage. At one point early in the show he was jumping up and down with his eyes closed. He acted all night like he just won the lottery.

As Bruce walked over to the left side of the stage during "Tenth Avenue" he noticed an "Are you loose?" sign which referenced the Milwaukee Bomb Scare show in 1975. He immediately broke into a grin of recognition.

Perhaps everyone was well rested. Maybe the little switch with Garry moving to Patti's usual part of the stage made everything fresh again. Maybe the relatively modest size of the Bradley Center had something to do with it. Maybe the guys went fishing in Sheboygan on what was an incredibly warm November Indian summer day. Whatever it was, it was really something to see. No ultra-rarities, just a great band in a great mood. —Dave Miller

## CONSECO FIELDHOUSE INDIANAPOLIS, IN NOVEMBER 10



**11/10 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Adam Raised a Cain/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/You Can Look/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day//Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

**11/10 NOTES:** The one-year anniversary

of the release of *Tracks* finds no songs from the box set played. No Patti.

**PRESS:** "CHORUS OF COMPLAINTS."

Marc D. Allan in the *Indianapolis Star*: In pop music, sound is all-important. The Boss would agree. But at the Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band concert Wednesday—the first rock show at the new \$183 million Conesco Fieldhouse—the sound by many accounts ranged from soupy echoes to sludgy.... To hear the head of the facility, its sound designer and the local concert promoter tell it, the blame lies mainly with Springsteen's personnel. A spokesman for Springsteen declined to comment and said no one from the musician's crew would be made available to answer questions. But reports from other venues support the contention that the man known as the Boss needs to step out from behind the guitar and hear what his audience is missing....

**MAKE IT TALK:** A solid, enthusiastic show with "Jungleland" much improved over the previous night. The biggest surprise of the night occurred during "Working on the Highway," when, after throwing his guitar to a fan and seeing he could play, Bruce waved him up onstage to finish the song with the band. The place went crazy. —Gordon Schreiber

**YOU EXPECTED "THE VELVET FOG"?:** I was on the floor, so maybe my sound was better than for the people in the upper levels. But most of the one-sided remarks on the local news stations for the next four days were a direct attack on Bruce and not the billion-dollar horse barn. So I would like to even the score—I have responded to the news stations and newspapers, but I felt a real fan would like to hear. The criticisms of the sound described Bruce's vocals as sounding "raspy" and "nasal"—did the media know who they came to see? My prayers go out to Patti, who was unable to be there. This made for a boys'-night-out jam session, though, including more interaction with the other band members, and for that I am truly thankful. This hayseed from Indiana had the time of his life. —Andrew Melling

## GUND ARENA CLEVELAND, OH 2 NIGHTS

### NOVEMBER 14 CLEVELAND / NIGHT 1



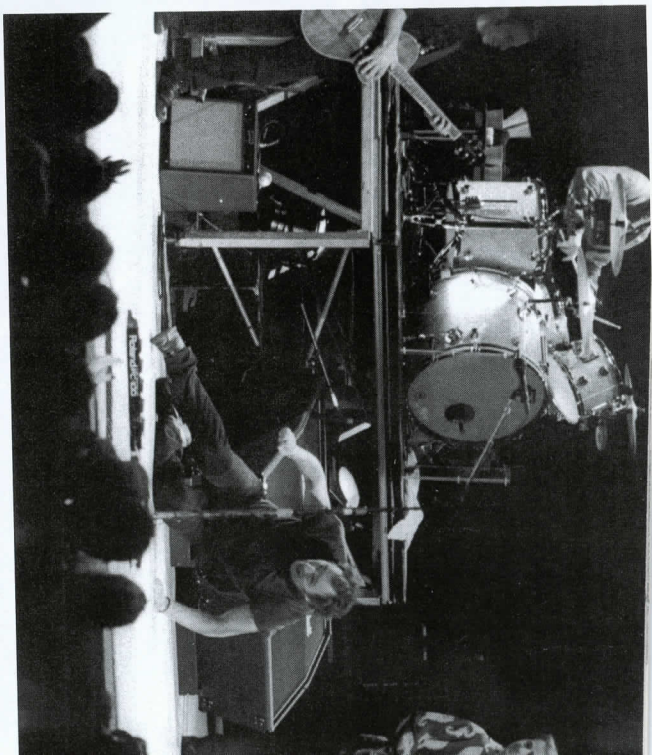
**11/14 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Working on the Highway/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day//Spirit in the Night/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

**11/14 NOTES:** "Light of Day" includes "Boom Boom" both nights in Cleveland. No Patti.

**PRESS:** "BOSS LOVES CLEVELAND, AND WE LOVE THE BOSS." John Soeder in the *Plain Dealer*: ... it was clear that the long-standing love affair between Springsteen and the self-proclaimed rock 'n' roll capital of the world had been rekindled. Before he became a superstar, the native of Freehold, NJ, was a popular draw here. His gigs at the Allen Theatre, the Cleveland Agora and the Coliseum in Richfield in the 1970s are legendary. He gave us another show to remember last night....

**BY THE LAKE, BUT NO MISTAKE:** It was clear from the opening moments of "Ties" that Cleveland was going to be a mutual love fest. The crowd was wild and enthusiastic but respectful, and Bruce rewarded us big time. And the sound—finally, a big arena with superb sound. No distortion, every instrument balanced. A standard set with the exception of "Spirit," but what a performance. Bruce was incredibly physical, and his voice sounded as strong as it has this tour. —Doug Baker





PUTTING THE "ROLL"  
IN "ROCK 'N' ROLL"  
NOVEMBER 15, 1999





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P	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN				
3	THE E STREET BAND				
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**11/15 NOTES:** No less than 12 songs not played the night before, including the debut of a new arrangement of "No Surrender" (the song itself a rarity, last played in Philly). Both "Growin' Up" and "Blinded By the Light" make the encores. Southside Johnny was spot-

**HIGH IN THE MIDDLE:** "No Surrender" may have been played already in Philly and Jersey, but this one was totally unique. Bruce even introduced the song by saying, "Alright, this is the first time we've done this one, so let's see..." It was an acoustic version, with the band joining later in the song, making it more like a country-western tune. Then it returned to acoustic, and the crowd sang the chorus. It was absolutely incredible, as was the show. Until this night, I thought the 9/25 Philly show was hands-down the best one yet. I have a hard time saying anything could top that show (especially with "Incident" leading off), but the second night in Cleveland was every bit as good if not better. —*Christopher Gehring*

**11/17 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/My Hometown/The

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I wasn't there in 1974; I was two. I can't vouch for them then, but last night the group and its leader exerted more energy than any number of today's angry young rockers do all week.... As the century comes to a close, Springsteen is not the craggy young blood he was. He's a little stiffer jumping off pianos. But



for three sweaty hours last night, he seemed to understand that pop-culture deification and a downright outrageously successful 25-year career can make a performer that much more inclined to kick out the jams.

**ROUND ON BOTH ENDS:** Springsteen's third Ohio show in four days was another keeper, although not quite at the epic level of the Cleveland shows. Another great crowd and incredible sound at the fabulous Schottenstein Center. Three genuine surprises in the set list. A great "Downbound Train" with a lot of guitar from Little Steven, followed by "She's the One." The big crowd-pleaser was the OSU marching band staple "Hang on Sloopy" in the middle of "Light of Day." The crowd was spelling out O-H-I-O just like they do when the OSU band plays it. Really cool, and a nice treat for Columbus. Bruce was a bit hoarse to start with and by the end was really straining. Another very solid show, though—Ohio received three strong performances. —Doug Baker

## MARINE MIDLAND BUFFALO, NY

NOVEMBER 19

**11/19 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Adam Raised a Cain/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/My Hometown/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Downbound Train/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day//Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Ramrod

**11/19 NOTES:** "No Surrender" is on the setlist but not played.

**IT TAKES A RED HEADED WOMAN:** The biggest thing I noticed was how much I missed Patti's presence. I've never considered myself to be a big Patti fan, but the lack of her harmonies was very noticeable, and the songs lacked something because of that. "Badlands," "Out in the Street," and, particularly, "If I Should Fall Behind" lacked a lot of the depth and emotion that I now realize she brings to the live performances. I've been a Bruce believer for a long time, and now I guess I'm a convert to Patti's contributions to the band. —Bob Mientus

**CAN I CALL A FRIEND?:** Comedy high-

Ink	10/19
River	Downbound
Adam	No Surrender (Guitar)
20's	USA?
Darkest	Backstreets
Promised Land/Darkness	Light
Hambone	Billy's
River	Burke
Youngstown	Light
Murder	Fall
Bad	Car. 2
Out	11/19/99

light: After Bruce did his "Is anybody alive out there," call-back several times, he made like Regis Philbin and yelled out, "Is that your final answer?" —John Oberholzer

## PEPSI ARENA ALBANY, NY

NOVEMBER 21

11/21 FLR 1 K 3  
B-PHON  
PEPSI ARENA - ALBANY NY  
6:30 PM  
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN  
THE E STREET BAND  
ORANGE COUNTY/RECORD/LASERPHEN  
11/21/99 SUN NOV 21 1999 7:30PM

**11/21 SOUNDHECK:** Patti's back at soundcheck, running through "Mansion on the Hill," last performed in Oakland.

**11/21 SETLIST:** The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Because the Night/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Jungleland/Light of Day//Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

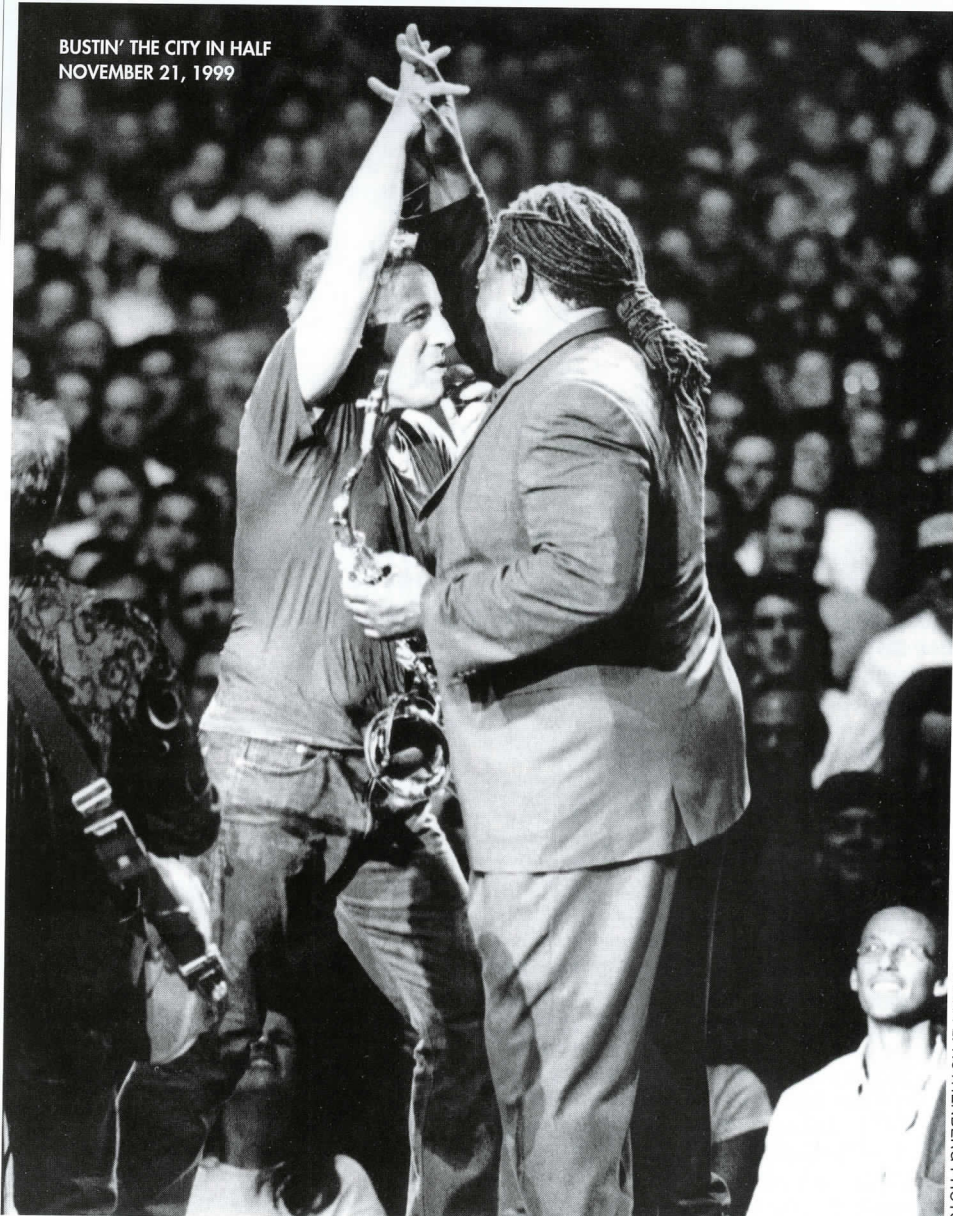
**11/21 NOTES:** After missing seven shows, Patti Scialfa is back onstage, and "My Hometown" makes way for "Mansion on the Hill."

"Light of Day" includes "Boom Boom." "New York City Serenade" is on the setlist but not played.

**SNOT A PROBLEM:** Bruce looked a little tired on stage in Albany. He's definitely fighting the effects of a cold, as he kept blowing his nose on stage, caught live on camera at the most inopportune times! He was noticeably happy to have Patti back. The crowd was not up to earlier shows on this tour, but the band is as tight as I can ever remember. "Because the Night" appeared to be an audible called after Steve and Bruce had a little discussion: Bruce had his acoustic in hand for "Tom Joad" when he called for the electric. —Ed Rodham

**LOST IN THE FLOOD:** A fair-to-good show. After a very strong start, this one lost steam and stayed flat. "Jungleland" typified the whole show: Clarence got slightly lost due to an imbalance with the sound, but found his place and got back on track to finish nicely. But Bruce just seemed... tired? In a hurry to finish? Rote? Suffering from a cold? Whatever, it was just an okay show. —Jonathan Pont

BUSTIN' THE CITY IN HALF  
NOVEMBER 21, 1999



DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO





## TARGET CENTER MINNEAPOLIS, MN 2 NIGHTS

**NOVEMBER 28  
MINNEAPOLIS / NIGHT 1**

11/28 SETLIST: The Ties That Bind/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Promised Land/Mansion on the Hill/The River/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Downbound Train/She's the One/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Born in the U.S.A./Backstreets/Light of Day/Ramrod/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams/Santa Claus is Comin' to Town

**11/28 NOTES:** Patti is again back onstage for this show originally scheduled for November 3. The tour debut of "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town," complete with St. Nick himself and four elves onstage tossing out candy canes. In the crowd: Paul Molitor and Kevin McHale.

**SANTA COMES TO TOWN:** Even people in the nosebleeds were up and dancing the entire night. This crowd rivaled the crowds at the last two shows in New Jersey. Maybe it was the anticipation that has been building for us here for almost a month, due to these shows being postponed. Bruce and the band matched the crowd's enthusiasm with passion and intensity. The *Star Tribune's* writer got it right when he said that "Badlands" was the most ferocious performance ever by any artist in the Target

Center. "She's the One" (an audible, I'm sure) was so tense, it felt like the building would explode. It seemed as if the release would never come. It didn't until after "Land of Hope and Dreams," when Santa made his appearance. Bruce brought his own Santa (who also played guitar), but there was also a fully suited Santa in the crowd near the stage. The spotlights played on him after "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town," while he and Bruce exchanged exuberant finger-pointing and shouts of "You da man!"—"No, you da man!" —David Homorody

**NOVEMBER 29  
MINNEAPOLIS / NIGHT 2**

11/29 SETLIST: My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Two Hearts/Trapped/Darlington County/Red Headed Woman/Factory/Point Blank/Youngstown/Murder Inc./Badlands/Out in the Street/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Where the Bands Are/Working on the Highway/No Surrender/Racing in the Street/Light of Day/Hungry Heart/Ramrod/Born to Run/Santa Claus is Comin' to Town/Thunder Road/If I Should Fall Behind/Land of Hope and Dreams

**11/29 NOTES:** Closing-night specials include the full-band version of "Red Headed Woman," the new acoustic arrangement of "No Surrender," and the second performance of "Santa" on this tour, featuring Chuck Plotkin onstage as one of the elves.

**THE PROMISE:** Monday's show was celebratory in tone and loose in delivery. Bruce told the crowd he was sorry they had to postpone the shows until Patti could be back with the

band. He looked over at her and said something like, "Got to have my red-head with me!" Then he said "We ought to do that song tonight. Yeah, let's do it right now". The band had already geared up for "Factory," but Bruce mumbled, "If I remember what key... Oh, yeah, it's in C. Come on, let's swing it!" Nils then kicked off the Western swing version of "Red Headed Woman," surely unrehearsed.

"Santa" made another appearance, with Roy starting it off alone once the Christmas tree descended from the rafters and holiday lights were lit around the risers. The night ended with "Land of Hope and Dreams" not followed by an extra rarity. But it closed in the best possible way, with Bruce ending the speculation: "We'll be out again next year!" The best early Christmas present ever. —David Homorody

Tour coverage will continue in the next issue—we assume!—with spring 2000 U.S. dates. As always, the help we receive from readers is essential. From photos to ticket stubs, setlists, press clippings and comments from the shows, all contributions are appreciated. E-mail comments and setlists to editor@backstreets.com, or send by fax or mail. Our reports wouldn't be possible without all the help Backstreets receives from its readers. Special thanks this time to: Linda Anable, Jeff Ashmun, Doug Baker, Joyce Bassett, Mark Bernhard, Dave Bernstein, Jerald Brewer, Colin Dale, John Duda, Shelly M. Edburg, Jonathan Gael, Todd Ganzman, Christopher Gehring, Jon Greer, Paul Henderson, David Homrody, Matt Hutchinson, Linda Infante, Daniel Kasprzak, Neal Leviton, Andrew Melling, Bob Mientus, Dave Miller, Robert Nicoletti, David O'Leary, George A. Paul, P. Jay Plutzer, Bob Rizzuti, Jody Roelse, Johnny Savage, Gordon Schreiber, Marc Shapiro, Lynn Smilow, Jay Snyder, Phil Stanley, Steven Svoboda, Bob Venable, Randy Weinzwieg, and everyone else who sent something our way. Keep it up!



**BRUCE  
SPRINGSTEEN  
&  
THE  
E STREET BAND**

**OCTOBER**

**NOVEMBER**

**U.S.A.  
1999  
LEG  
TWO**

Phoenix 15 AZ	Los Angeles 17 CA	Los Angeles 18 CA	Los Angeles 21 CA	Los Angeles 23 CA	Oakland 25 CA	Oakland 26 CA	Oakland 28 CA	Fargo 6 ND	Milwaukee 9 WI	Indianapolis 10 IN	Cleveland 14 OH	Cleveland 15 OH	Columbus 17 OH	Buffalo 19 NY	Albany 21 NY	Minneapolis 28 MN	Minneapolis 29 MN
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MY LOVE WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN  
TAKE 'EM AS THEY COME  
THE TIES THAT BIND  
DON'T LOOK BACK  
ADAM RAISED A CAIN  
PROVE IT ALL NIGHT  
TWO HEARTS  
DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN  
THE PROMISED LAND  
TRAPPED  
DARLINGTON COUNTY  
ATLANTIC CITY  
RED HEADED WOMAN  
MANSION ON THE HILL  
FACTORY  
MY HOMETOWN  
THE RIVER  
INDEPENDENCE DAY  
POINT BLANK  
YOUNGSTOWN  
MURDER INCORPORATED  
BADLANDS  
OUT IN THE STREET  
TENTH AVENUE FREEZE-OUT  
YOU CAN LOOK  
WHERE THE BANDS ARE  
WORKING ON THE HIGHWAY  
BECAUSE THE NIGHT  
INCIDENT ON 57TH STREET  
FOR YOU  
DOWNBOUND TRAIN  
SHE'S THE ONE  
THE GHOST OF TOM JOAD  
SINALOA COWBOYS  
BORN IN THE U.S.A.  
THE PROMISE  
NO SURRENDER  
MEETING ACROSS THE RIVER  
JUNGLELAND  
BACKSTREETS  
RACING IN THE STREET  
LIGHT OF DAY  
THIS HARD LAND  
CADILLAC RANCH  
HUNGRY HEART  
SPIRIT IN THE NIGHT  
RAMROD  
BOBBY JEAN  
BORN TO RUN  
SOUL MAN  
GROWIN' UP  
THUNDER ROAD  
IF I SHOULD FALL BEHIND  
LAND OF HOPE AND DREAMS  
BLINDED BY THE LIGHT  
SANTA CLAUS IS COMIN' TO TOWN

MY LOVE  
TAKE 'EM  
TIES  
DON'T LOOK  
ADAM  
PROVE IT  
TWO HEARTS  
DARKNESS  
PROMISED  
TRAPPED  
DARLINGTON  
ATLANTIC CITY  
RED HEADED  
MANSION  
FACTORY  
HOMETOWN  
THE RIVER  
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YOU CAN LOOK  
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FOR YOU  
DOWNBOUND  
SHE'S THE ONE  
TOM JOAD  
SINALOA  
U.S.A.  
THE PROMISE  
SURRENDER  
MEETING  
JUNGLELAND  
BACKSTREETS  
RACING  
LIGHT OF DAY  
HARD LAND  
CADILLAC  
HUNGRY  
SPIRIT  
RAMROD  
BOBBY JEAN  
BORN TO RUN  
SOUL MAN  
GROWIN' UP  
THUNDER  
FALL BEHIND  
HOPE  
BLINDED  
SANTA CLAUS



# ON COLLECT ING

By Richard Breton

**F**or the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.



## •New Jersey Nights

(Crystal Cat, 3CD)

Sound: 7-10

Performance: 9

Packaging: 8

No one who was there can forget that banner: "BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E STREET BAND, 15 SHOWS SOLD OUT." In the vast pantheon of Bruce shows, it was more than a historic series of performances. It was the summer event of a lifetime, a place where thousands of fans from all over the world congregated for as little as one or for all 15 days and nights. To see Bruce and the reunited E Street Band in New Jersey was a calling they could not ignore. They took days off

from work, or even quit their jobs. They pooled their resources and called in all their favors. They had to be there.

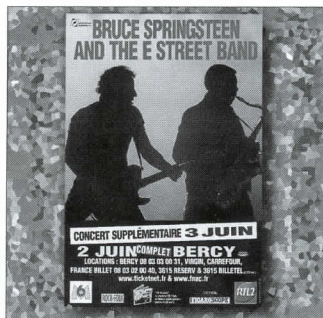
Bruce and the band were there too. And over the course of 15 nights they played around 70 different songs. There were some that hadn't been played live in many moons, like "Don't Look Back," "Something in the Night," "The Ties That Bind," "Night," and "New York City Serenade." There were live premieres of songs from *Tracks* and *18 Tracks*, like "Take 'Em as They Come," "Back in Your Arms" and "Trouble River," as well as many 1999 tour premieres like "Point Blank," "Spirit in the Night," "Downbound Train," "Jersey Girl" and, at long last, "Rosalita (Come Out Tonight)." In fact, there were so many songs of this nature that Crystal Cat, rather than release a series of complete live shows, decided to compile all these rare performances on one set.

In order to fit this on three CDs, most of the songs that made up the standard set list were not included. You won't hear staples like "Two Hearts," "Youngstown," "Murder Incorporated," "Badlands," "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," or "Thunder Road" performed here. Since those songs are available on so many other sets, *New Jersey Nights* becomes a unique document and a fun listen start to finish, with relative rarities like "Trapped," "Candy's Room," a full-band version of "No Surrender," "Be True," "Janey Don't You Lose Heart," "Rendezvous," and "Fourth Of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)."

The sound varies somewhat, sometimes even between tracks taken from the same show, but considering that 13 out of the 15 shows performed in New Jersey are represented on this set and the speed with which it was released, the mastering is phenomenal. The audience applause from different tracks is mixed together to create a continuous flow rather than completely fading out between tracks. The only downside is that there are now better tapes in circulation for several songs on this set, apparently not available to Crystal Cat at the time of this release.

As compilations go, this is one of the better ones. The songs are included in mostly chronological order, and the packaging is out-

standing. Sure, there are many full shows from this stand that fans will want to have, and there are several shows that deserve to be released in full. But this is such a great souvenir of the New Jersey shows that it can't be ignored. Even if you weren't there, you'll want to have this set just to marvel at what a historic series of shows it was. Highly recommended.



## •Bercy Night

(Crystal Cat, 2CD)

Sound: 8

Performance: 8

Packaging: 8

After a nearly two-week break in the beginning of May, Bruce and the band resumed the 1999 tour over in Europe. This last half of the European tour is considered by some fans to have brought the strongest performances of the tour to date. This set is taken from the second show at Bercy Stadium in Paris on 6/3/99, squarely in the middle of this leg.

This particular night featured the live premieres of both "Lion's Den" and "Loose Ends" (from the *Tracks* box set), as well as the '99 tour premiere of "Racing In The Street." "Lion's Den" has not appeared at any other show in 1999, and that alone will make many fans seek out this set. The show kicks off with "I Wanna Be With You," which makes this night one of the special ones to have contained three *Tracks* songs—a particularly notable rarity as the tour progressed. In addition, Jean Beauvoir guests on "Hungry Heart."

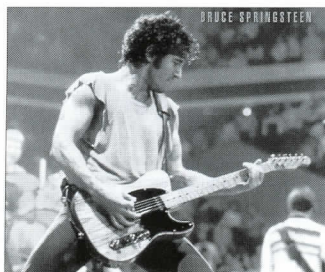
On the plus side: "Lion's Den" is much fun, the "echo" effect on Bruce's voice during "Youngstown" is captured to great effect, and the latter part of "Racing in the Street" is a tour-de-force for Roy Bittan on the piano.

On the minus side: "Loose Ends" drags unexpectedly, Patti's harmony vocals are off-key on

"Factory," and Bruce practically phones in the band introductions during "Tenth Avenue."

The sound on this release isn't quite up to some previous Crystal Cat releases, such as *Earls Court Night* and *Arnhem Night*, rank it with *Milano Night* for sound. It also captures a shorter show, which accounts for *Bercy Night* being a two-CD set with no bonus tracks. The packaging is up to the Cat's high standards; the only flaw on my copy was the incomplete graphics on one of the discs.

While completists might want this set, there are other releases from this tour I'd recommend first. Many might want to wait until "Lion's Den" is included on a compilation or as a bonus track on another release.



## •Alpine Valley Night

(Crystal Cat, 3CD)

Sound: 9

Performance: 8

Packaging: 9

## •Sugarland

(E. St., 3CD)

Sound: 9

Performance: 10

Packaging: 7

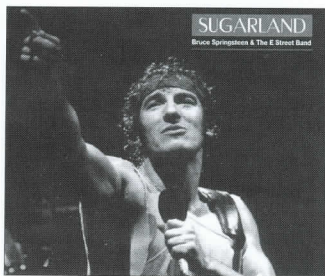
In a review of *Where the Rivers Meet*, I talked about how the first U.S. leg of the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour could be further broken up into sections: the mostly upper-Midwest shows in late June through July, the August through September upper-East Coast shows with extended stays in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and the Southern shows from November through January (capped off with a couple of shows in New York and Rhode Island). While *Where the Rivers Meet* was from the middle section, these two new titles represent strong releases from the other two.

First up is *Alpine Valley Night*, taken from the commonly traded 7/12/84 show from the Alpine Valley Music Theater in East Troy, WI. It was still fairly early



in the tour, which really began to hit its stride in August. This was not a perfect show, and, clocking in at around two hours and 50 minutes, certainly not the longest show, but it's perfect for the period. Notable inclusions are "Open All Night," "Used Cars," a beautiful version of "No Surrender," and "Street Fighting Man." A truly outstanding version of "Man at the Top" is probably the best existing live version of this rarely played song, which alone makes this a special night. There wasn't a part of this show that could really be called a true "Nebraska set," as "Atlantic City" is only followed by "Open All Night," and "Used Cars" was later in the show. These *Nebraska* songs aren't the bleaker songs from the album, and along with the inclusion of "Sherry Darling" and "Rosalita" that makes for a show that's all fun from beginning to end. No less than 14 bonus tracks are added to the third disc, which must be some sort of record.

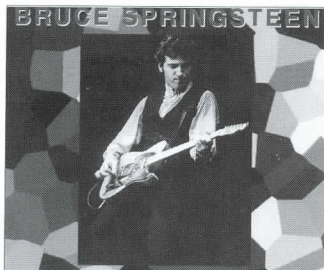
In addition to the above, what distinguishes this set and should place it in everyone's must-have list is the sound. I've never heard the 7/12 show sound like this before, and the bonus tracks are almost all uniformly fine-sounding as well. Every instrument and vocal are clear as a bell—check out the keyboards in "Bobby Jean." And "Man at the Top," with those sublime background vocals from the band, has never sounded better. Crystal Cat exceeded all expectations with this release. The packaging is top-notch as well. A truly outstanding job.



Equally outstanding in many respects is the latest offering from E. St. Records called "Sugarland," which documents the 11/18/84 show from the Bob Devaney Sports Center in Lincoln, NE. This is from the third section of the first U.S. leg, where the shows were decidedly darker in tone and content.

This show does contain a *Nebraska* set, with "Atlantic City" followed by fine versions of "Johnny 99," "Reason to Believe" and "Nebraska"—the third eliciting the strongest response from the Lincoln crowd. Other notable tracks are "Johnny Bye Bye," "Downbound Train," "I'm on Fire," a superb extended "Racing in the Street" followed by an equally powerful "Jungleland," a fine final performance of the unreleased song "Sugarland"—only played once before, two days earlier—and a fun "Santa Claus is Comin' To Town" as the final encore that pushes this show near the three-and-a-quarter-hour mark.

There are no bonus tracks on this set, and the packaging seems a bit skimpy given E. St.'s past efforts. But bonus tracks and packaging are secondary concerns here. Crystal Cat has previously released a strong contender for the best-sounding title from this tour with *Kansas City Night* from the day after this *Nebraska* show. *Sugarland* sounds nearly as good, which should place it very near the top of the list. And, in my opinion, the performance in Lincoln exceeds that on *Kansas City Night*. Recommended.



•**Passaic Night**  
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)  
Sound: 10  
Performance: 10  
Packaging: 8

This is another long-overdue re-release of the famous 9/19/78 radio broadcast from the Capitol Theater in Passaic, NJ. This show has been released previously on several labels, the best of which was *Pièce De Résistance* on the now-defunct Great Dane label. That title has been out of print for nearly five years and, as such, has been highly sought-after by collectors. Since the show represented here is so well-known and revered by fans, let's concentrate on the benefits of this particular release rather than on the show itself.

First-off is the sound, which, while it's a slightly better mix that has evened out some minor rough spots and given some emphasis to the midrange, is practically identical to Great Dane's release. Some will prefer this mix, and to give Crystal Cat credit they did a fine job, but sound improvements alone are not reasons to own this set.

As with most Crystal Cat titles, there are appropriate and great-sounding bonus tracks included here, all from soundboard sources. Most notable are the ones taken from the other two shows on this stand: "Good Rockin' Tonight," "It's My Life" and "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" are taken from the 9/20 show, while "High School Confidential," "Sweet Little Sixteen," "The Fever," and "Incident on 57th Street" are taken from the show on the 9/21. A couple of tunes from the 1/1/79 show in Cleveland round out the set, but these have been released before and could have been left off. In fact, all these bonus tracks have been released before, and many already have them, so even their inclusion is not reason enough to own this set.

Some will want this set to gain any sound improvements or for the better mix. Others may also be interested in the bonus tracks, but they'll soon want more complete tapes of those shows. The fans who really need to own this set are those that missed out on getting Great Dane's *Pièce De Résistance* when it was available, and for those folks this set is a long time comin'—and of course, highly recommended.

•**Runaway American Dreams**  
(Doberman, 2CD-R)  
Sound: 5  
Performance: 9  
Packaging: 6

In August of 1975, before the *Born to Run* album would be officially released, Bruce and the E Street Band—which by this time included Miami Steve Van Zandt—played ten shows over five nights at the Bottom Line in New York City. This series of shows made *Rolling Stone's* 25 best-live-performances list back in 1987. To loosely paraphrase Bruce, the band was ten times better after having played these shows than before, and from listening one could argue that the

band was never tighter then they were these nights.

The most famous of these shows was the early show on 8/15, broadcast live on WNEW-FM in New York and released previously on Great Dane's lauded *Live at the Bottom Line*. Doberman's *Runaway American Dreams* is taken from the best and/or most complete audience tapes of a few other shows played during this stand.

The bulk of this release documents the early show from 8/14/75, with bonus tracks taken from the early shows on 8/16 and 8/17. Because there were two shows a night, each was relatively short. The setlists were a bit more static as well. Surprisingly, the *Born to Run* songs weren't given special emphasis, so the shows ended up being an almost equal mix of songs from Bruce's first three albums, with several cover tunes thrown in.

Across the stand, the 8/14 show is nearly as solid as the 8/15 broadcast, with the exception of the classic extra-long story before "The E Street Shuffle." The show on the 14th also contains the live debut of "Night." Other highlights included in the bonus tracks (and not found in the 8/15 show) are "For You" and covers of "Sha La La," "It's Gonna Work Out Fine" and an excellent "Up On The Roof."

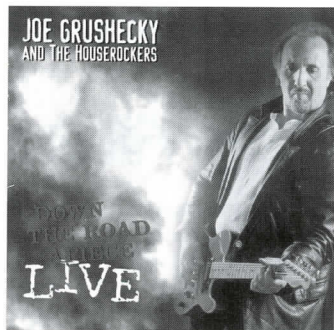
None of the audience tapes of this stand could be described as excellent, and this is no exception. But there's very little distortion or hiss on the mono source tape used here, and it's quite listenable. *Runaway American Dreams* is for anyone blown away by the 8/15 show who would like to hear more from the historic stand that found Bruce and the band in top form. But there are plenty of other radio broadcasts, soundboards, and even better-sounding audience tapes from 1975 to keep most people happy. 🐾





**W**hile we still wait for a new live album from the E Street Band, live tracks featuring Bruce Springsteen as an honorary Houserocker are available now. *Down the Road Apiece LIVE* is the first live release from Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers, and that alone makes it noteworthy. But in capturing performances from several live gigs in their hometown of Pittsburgh, it includes a few songs from their 1995 "October Assault" tour with the Boss in tow. Springsteen can be found on three of the album's thirteen songs: "Talking to the King," "Pumping Iron," and the album's title track. The album's line-up also contains live versions of Houserockers songs co-written by Springsteen, such as "Dark and Bloody Ground" and "Idiot's Delight." Look for *Down the Road Apiece LIVE* on Schoolhouse Records.

Columbia recently reissued Springsteen's *Chimes of Freedom* EP in the U.S. on a five-inch CD, at long last, but they didn't get it quite right. Rather than restore the CD3's edited versions of "Tougher Than the Rest" and "Chimes of Freedom" to their full length, the new CD, though remastered, kept those songs truncated. The original vinyl EP had the full versions, as does the Canadian CD5. *ICE Magazine*, through typical determination and persistence, was able to provide an update in its "CD Watchdog" column. According to *ICE*, a "very well-placed, veteran, high-up source" at Sony music reports that the error is being corrected, and new pressings of the disc will contain the full versions. *ICE* also provides the number of Sony's Customer Service line, to exchange the edited version for a replacement: (800) 255-7514.



## Little Steven: Born Again Savage

By Robert Bader

1999 will surely be remembered as a banner year for Steve Van Zandt. Always the wearer of many hats, Steve added acting to his repertoire with a role in HBO's hit series *The Sopranos*, and of course he was back on the road with the E Street Band. But the most significant event was the release in September of the fifth Little Steven album, *Born Again Savage*. It already would be notable if only for the fact that eleven years had passed since the release of his fourth album, *Revolution*, but beyond that, *Born Again Savage* contains some of Steve's strongest work.

*Born Again Savage* was actually recorded in 1994 and remained on the shelf for several years. After hearing the album, it's hard to think of a reason why. From the opening salvo of the title track, it never lets up. The religious theme and hard-rocking, guitar-dominated sound immediately bring to mind a more lyrically mature version of the Yardbirds. In fact, Steven cites the Yardbirds—along with the Kinks and the Who—as a primary influence in his liner notes. But the few quiet moments on the album stand out as highlights as well. "Camouflage of Righteousness" and "Saint Francis" both feature acoustic guitars, the former with an Eastern rhythm that would not be out of place on a Led Zeppelin album.

Backed by the remarkable rhythm section of drummer Jason Bonham and U2 bassist Adam Clayton, Steve turns in his finest guitar playing. In the master plan that Steve outlined for the five Little Steven albums he would call *Born Again Savage* "the religion record," but it could also be called "the guitar record." There's nothing subtle here. Play it loud. The quality of the recording

and the production are also top-notch. And Steven's vocals have never sounded better.

Lyrically, Little Steven's albums are consistently thought-provoking and passionate. On that account *Born Again Savage* does not disappoint. From the album's closing track, "Tongues of Angels":

*Look what you've done to the blood of the Earth  
Look how you've changed the balance  
Look at the desecration of my church  
You're morally bankrupt and blind  
While your children pay for your crimes.*

Given the themes explored on the album, it's a major achievement that it doesn't come across as heavy-handed. In fact, *Born Again Savage* is a surprisingly accessible album. Previous Little Steven albums like *Freedom No Compromise* and *Revolution*

were a bit of a challenge to some listeners who might not have been expecting some of the international influences, but this time out it's pure rock 'n' roll. In fact, "Guns, Drugs, and Gasoline" would fit in pretty well on *Having a Rave-Up With the Yardbirds* (And not just because of the riff from "Train Kept a-Rollin'" that kicks off the track.) "Salvation" has the feel of the hook-laden pop songs like "Forever" and "Angel

Eyes" from Steven's first album, *Men Without Women*, but with a much harder edge. *Born Again Savage* is closer in style, though, to *Voice Of America*, arguably Steven's finest album.

*Born Again Savage* is clearly an homage to Steven's guitar heroes, and provides a very good picture of what must be in Little Steven's record collection. It stands as proof of the theory that an artist makes his best music when he makes it to please himself.

The only thing missing from Steve's banner year was a Little Steven tour. This music begs to be performed live. The hope would be that he can somehow find the time.



Springsteen's "Chicken Lips and Lizard Hips," a gastronomic nightmare but a favorite Boss rarity, is now available again. The compilation album *For Our Children*, out of print for a few years now, was reissued in October by Kid Rhino in a "10th Anniversary Edition." As with the original 1991 Disney release, sales still benefit the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric Fund.

The phenomenally successful *The Sopranos* has put Steve Van Zandt in the spotlight with his role as Silvio Dante. Now the HBO series is providing a vehicle for Steve's music to be heard by a wider audience as well. Little

Steven & the Disciples of Soul's "Inside of Me" is one of the tracks on *The Sopranos: Music From The HBO Original Series*. Steve's tune takes its place beside tracks by such heavy-hitters as Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra, Van Morrison, and Bruce Springsteen, whose "State Trooper" is also included on the soundtrack.

According to *Sopranos* creator and executive producer David Chase, Steve had a hand in creating an album worthy of the series. An AP story reported: "As Chase and producer Martin Bruestle leaned toward edgy pop, Van Zandt weighed in. 'He was appalled at the musical selection,'

Chase recalled. 'He has some kind of connection to people who are connected to people who are connected.' They listen to Sinatra, Bennett, Jerry Vale. Not this stuff you're putting in there," Steven told me."

The AP story also adds: "Chase asked Van Zandt to consider who else a 40-year-old working-class guy from Jersey might favor. How about, say, Springsteen? Yeah, maybe, Van Zandt replied. 'It opened the door,' Chase said."

*The Sopranos* soundtrack was released in December by Play-Tone/Columbia. ➔

—Christopher Phillips



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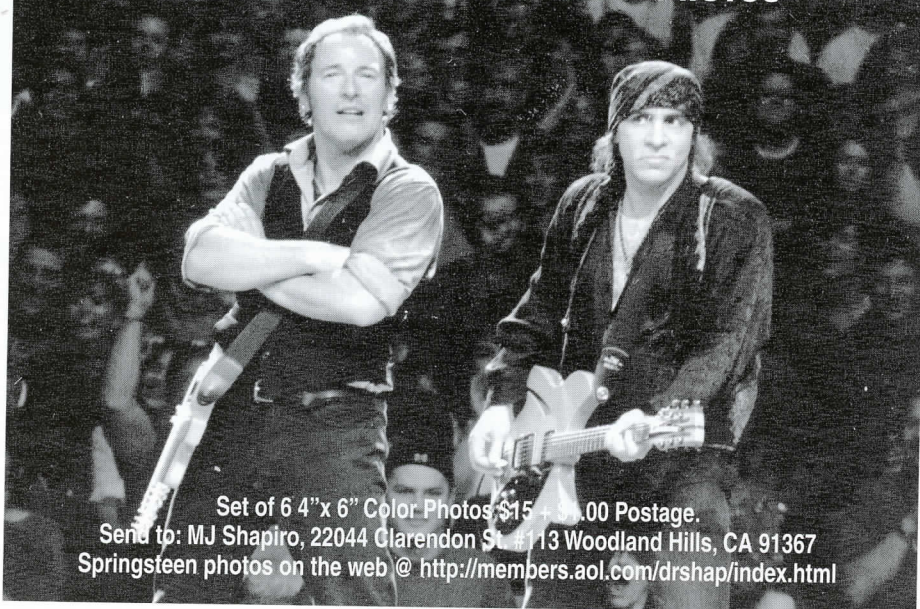
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## Continued from page 5

out stopping) "Youngstown"/"Murder Incorporated"/ "Badlands"/"Out in the Street"/"Tenth Avenue Freeze-out." I find this to be the day-in/day-out highlight of the show, a guaranteed crowd-pleaser, and a huge statement by Bruce and the band about their endurance, virtuosity and commitment. Nils Lofgren's amazing guitar solo at the end of "Youngstown" is one of the greatest moments of the show.

The energy level in the building during "Badlands" and "Out in the Street" is always at a peak, and I am convinced that after that mini-set is complete, no one in the house is wondering if they are going to get their money's worth. I've had some people say they have tired of the predictability, but not me. Instead, I have been totally blown away each time I have seen it, awestruck by its sheer power.

Jon Greer  
via e-mail

## HALFWAY TO HEAVEN

Dear Editor:

I just got back from the first show in Oakland, and I just wanted to share this experience with you. I've spent all my 19 years in that city, and tonight I think I've experienced the most memorable occurrence in my life. I don't know what exactly it was, it wasn't like Bruce played any songs that were out of the ordinary. But seeing him in my town I think made this whole experience that much more special.

The last year and a half has been difficult. I've seen friends turn into strangers when returning home from college, people I thought I could trust turning their backs on me when I needed them the most. I've felt like the last year or so I've been getting the short end of the stick. Nothing seemed to be working out for me. But tonight something happened. I was inspired for the first time in a long while. I'm tired of getting kicked around, and I feel like it's time for me to start living. "Mister I ain't a boy, no I'm a man," Bruce sang tonight, and I feel tonight that line was dedicated to me. I don't know if it's because it's late now and my ears are still ringing with the sounds of the ministry of rock 'n' roll, or that I just can't tell my courage from my desperation anymore, but I sang every word with all my heart and soul tonight, and I feel hopeful now. Hopeful that things are gonna start turning around for me. The world seems to be a little more clear to me. Thanks, Bruce, for showing me the light.

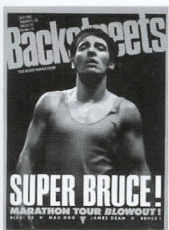
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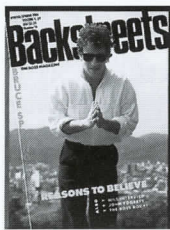


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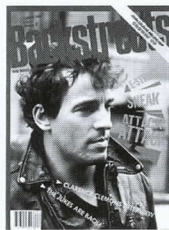
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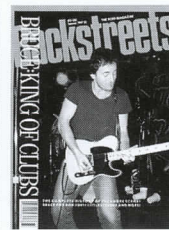
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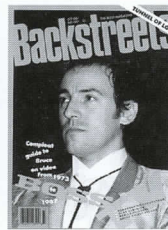
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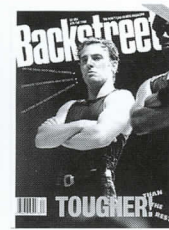
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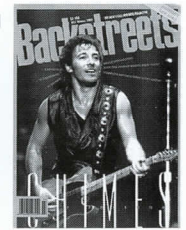
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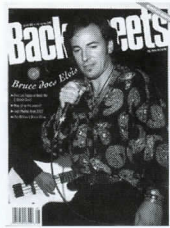
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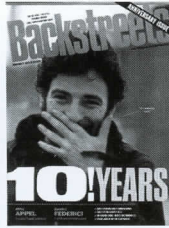
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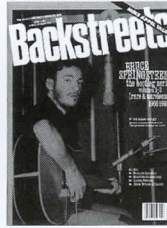
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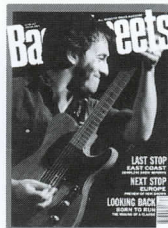
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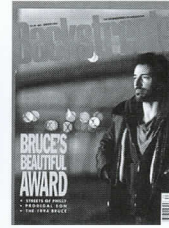
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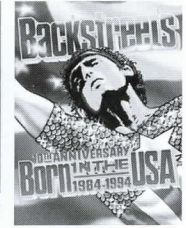
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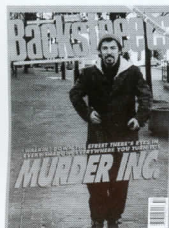
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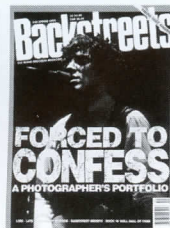
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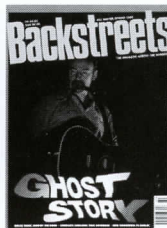
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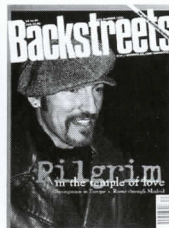
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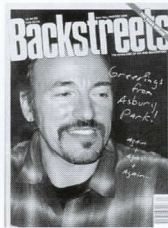
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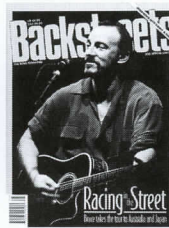
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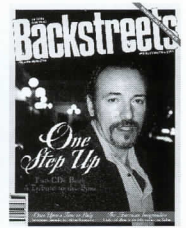
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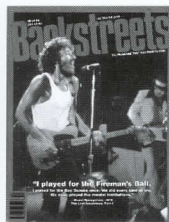
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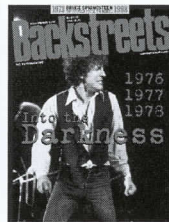
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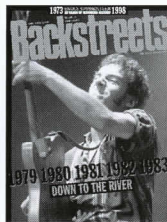
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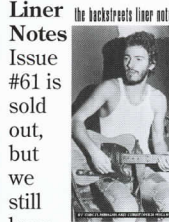
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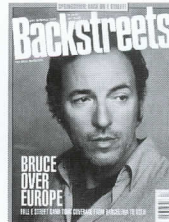
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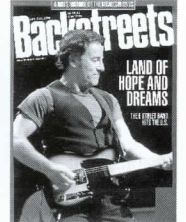
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